

The American-Chinese Writers' Association have again nominated Chinese writer Wang Meng for the Nobel Prize in Literature.

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As the saying goes, "in summer, a watermelon a day keeps the doctor away!"

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"Only someone who has real nautical experience knows what it's like. It makes me cherish my life hugely."

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By Su Wei

After a six-month quest for compensation from Qantas Airlines for an injury she sustained during an international flight, 64-year-old Tao Longfang and her husband Han Wencheng are commencing legal proceedings against the carrier.

The couple say that Qantas has never actually apologized to them over the incident, that they cannot accept the compensation agreement prepared by Qantas, and that their human rights have been violated.

The accident

In December last year, Tao and Han joined a tour group organized by China Travel International for a 12-day sightseeing trip to Australia and New

Zealand. On December 27, the couple boarded Qantas Flight 119 from Sydney to Auckland.

While a flight attendant was checking luggage before the plane took off, a tin can fell from the overhead luggage compartment and struck Tao's left ear. "I became dizzy and couldn't hear," she told *Beijing Today*. "The hostess kept saying something, though I could only understand one word - 'sorry'."

The tour guide Li Yan then came to interpret for the couple. "The flight attendant apologized and I accepted her apology, and that was it," Tao recalls.

Tao's condition did not improve after they arrived in Auckland. "It was so painful that I was quite unable to enjoy the scenery of New Zealand. Neither could my husband, as he had to take care of me," she says.

On January 2, two days after the couple returned to Beijing, Tao went to Beijing Bo Ai Hospital, where she was diagnosed with traumatic hearing loss in her left ear.

\$AU 7,500 compensation

With a notarized diagnosis and a statement describing the accident from China Travel International, Han went to the Beijing office of Qantas in mid-January to seek compensation. In the claim Han presented to the office, they couple insisted that Qantas should offer compensation, "because the accident happened in Australia on a Qantas flight and was the result of the flight attendant's carelessness." The claim said the compensation should cover Tao's physical injury, the couple's resultant spiritual loss, and the loss of enjoyment of their holiday.

The couple did not specify compensation amount in the letter. "We had no idea how much they would offer. But we insisted it be a fair and reasonable amount, as well as being consistent with Qantas' policy in handling such claims," Tao says.

Following an inquiry about the progress of their claim one month later, the couple received a letter on February 19, bearing the printed signature of Rodney Williams, Insurance Claims Manager. The letter stated that enquiries were being conducted and that they needed to contact the relevant crewmember. The couple replied with a description of the flight attendant, adding that they realized she had not deliberately caused Tao's injury.

Around one month later, the Qantas Beijing Office informed Tao she should go to the Bayley and Jackson Medical Center, at Ritan Donglu, for diagnosis by Doctor Peter Guerin, the senior medical officer there. "We wrote to them that we could not understand why a diagnosis was required three months after the accident. I no longer suffered any pain or dizziness, though I still cannot hear

clearly," Tao says, "Anyway we agreed, as we wanted an amicable settlement." According to the medical report, Tao has suffered hearing loss in the left ear as a result of damage to the inner ear, likely to have been caused by trauma from the falling luggage. The report also states that while Tao's hearing may have continued improvement, she may suffer some permanent hearing loss.

The couple says on April 1, the office contacted them, asking if they wanted to seek an amicable settlement over the matter. "We were told that the compensation would be up to 10,000, and if this was not acceptable, we should state how much we wanted," Han says. "But they did not tell us in which currency the compensation would be made."

The couple sent a letter, stating that

Compensation Claim Turns to Litigation

they were prepared to settle the matter amicably, if Qantas really wanted to accept their due responsibility. "We had no idea how much the compensation would be. But we told them 10,000 yuan would be too little," Tao said.

In late May, when the couple were again asked how much they were prepared to settle for, Han said 250,000 yuan. "I just picked the amount at random," she told *Beijing Today*. "But they rejected the amount, even when I reduced it to 150,000 yuan."

Several days later, Qantas asked the couple to list the expenses incurred as a result of Tao's injury and state the amount of compensation they wanted. They suggested 81,300 yuan, after calculating the money they had spent and losses incurred. When this figure was rejected, they lowered the amount to 53,800 yuan.

In mid-June, the couple were asked if they would accept compensation of AU \$7,500 (around 40,000 yuan). "Almost six months had passed. We wanted to finish the matter, so we faxed them our agreement, together with a compensation agreement draft," Han says.

A Ms. Chen, who deals with domestic claims at the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC), and was unwilling to give her full name, told *Beijing Today* the AU \$7,500 is not a small amount. "In the claims we handle, medical expenses are usually the only ones covered by airline companies as compensation," she said.

An insult?

Tao says when they received the Deed of Release from Qantas, they were not only furious but also felt insulted.

Besides being angry about the use of words such as "allege" and "threaten", the couple say they will never agree to "compromise the claim without any admission of Qantas' liability. If Qantas is not liable, why should we insist on compensation and why do they want an amicable settlement?" says Han. "Nor do we agree to the clause 'leasing and forever discharging Qantas from any liability relating to the claim.'"

"Qantas cannot deprive us of the right to claim. They must have thought we would trouble them for ever, even after they compensated us," Tao says. "We just want them to make an apology."

The couple say they also cannot accept that the governing law of the deed is the one applicable in the State of New South Wales, Australia and that they must submit to the jurisdiction of the courts of the State of New South Wales. "Why does the deed say that the English version has priority over the Chinese one, and why is there no place for their signature? It is like an indenture for us to sell ourselves," Tao says.

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Modern Architecture in Ancient City

By Hou Mingxin

Designs for two major building projects have been unveiled during the past two weeks. The two new buildings will dramatically contribute to the transformation of Beijing into a futuristic city of the 21st century.

The conceptual design for Beijing's National Swimming Center was selected Tuesday. The design, by a consortium of Chinese and Australian architects, resembles a liquid blue cube.

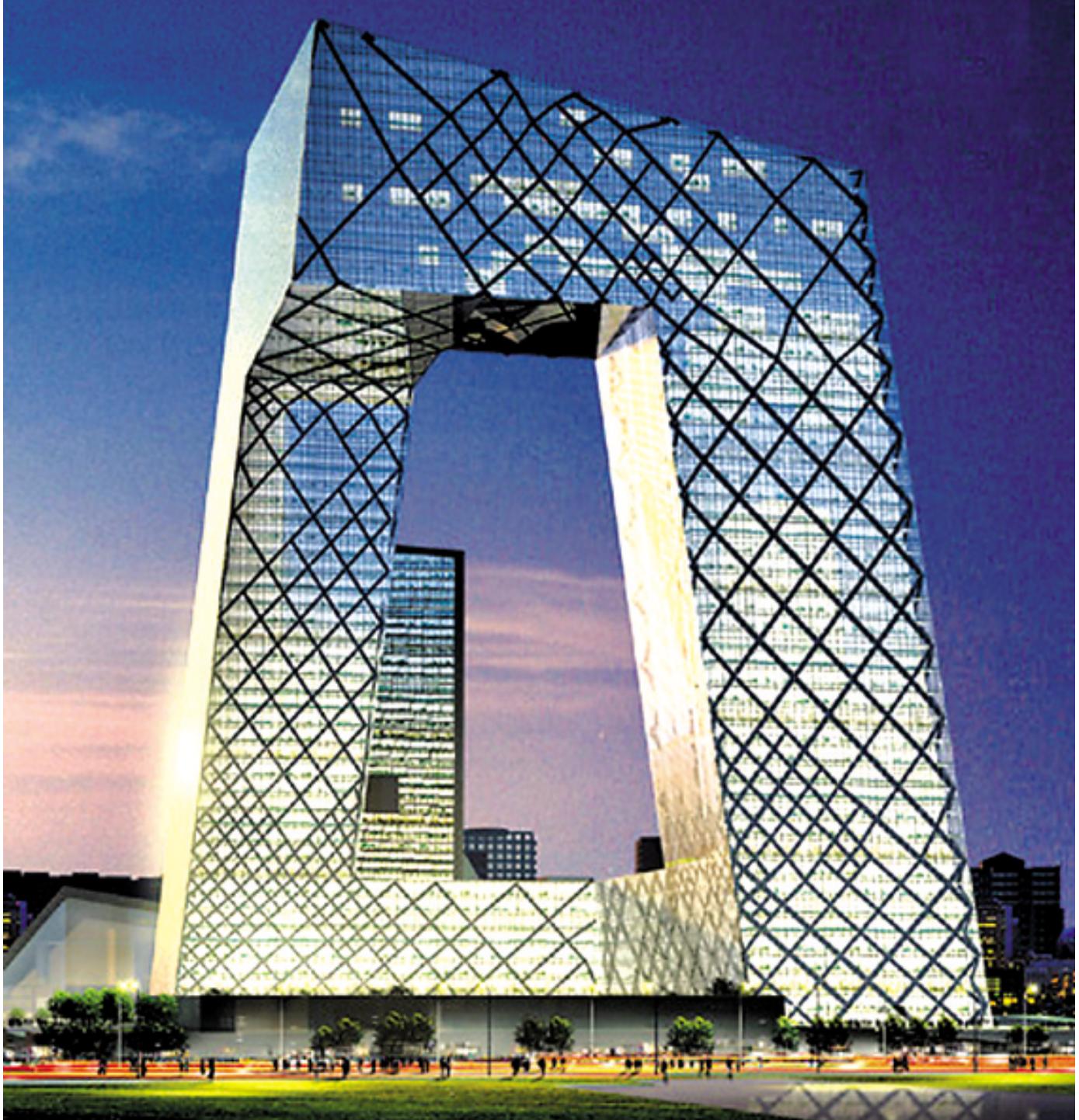
Meanwhile, last Sunday, China Central Television (CCTV) unveiled the architectural design for its new headquarters. The building, a huge arch joined by two V-shaped steel constructions, was designed by Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas.

The 230-meter tower will be a landmark in the heart of the new Central Business District in eastern Beijing. The \$600 million project will have a floor space of 550,000 square meters

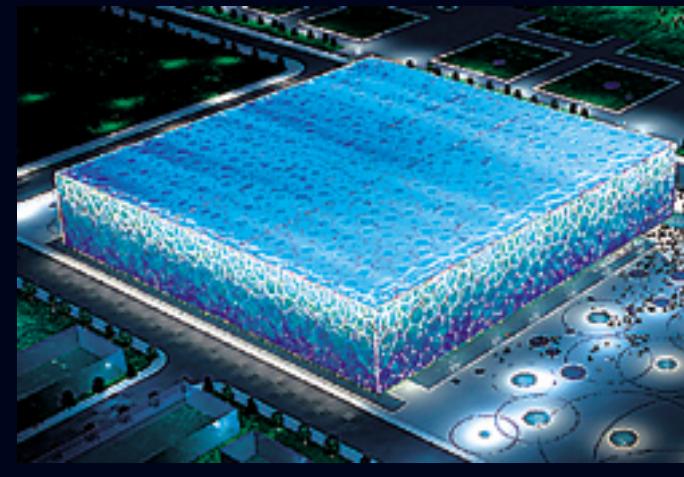
and is due to be completed in 2008.

The two buildings join two other recently commenced projects: the "nest-like" National Stadium, also located on the Olympic Green, and the National Grand Theater, on Chang'an Avenue.

The common feature of these four constructions is that they combine modern design with traditional architectural aesthetics and culture.



An artist's impression of the new CCTV Headquarters.



The conceptual design for the National Swimming Center, which will be a key component of the Olympic Green. Construction is due to start this December, and will be completed by the end of 2006. It will cover a floor space of 70,000 square meters and will seat 17,000. Total investment is estimated at 830 million yuan (US \$100 million).

Photo by Zhao Xiaojun

EXECUTIVE EDITOR: JIAN RONG DESIGNER: LI SHI

City to Launch Olympic Marketing Plan in September

By Hou Mingxin

Jiang Xiaoyu, vice president of the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad (BOCOG), announced at a press conference on July 18 in Beijing that a grand ceremony would be held on September 1 to officially launch the marketing program for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

"The Olympic Games in China will provide an honorable opportunity for Chinese firms to present themselves to the world and for foreign companies to strengthen or build their ties with China," Jiang said.

He did not release details of the pro-

gram, but expressed confidence that the Games would be profitable.

Jiang said BOCOG expects to boost spending on the 2008 Games, taking security issues into consideration. However, the final budget will not be decided until next year, after negotiations are held with the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

BOCOG signed its marketing plan agreement with the IOC last month, he added.

According to Jiang, previous estimates put the cost of the 2008 Games at US\$1.609 billion, while BOCOG has forecast the event to earn US\$1.625 bil-

lion, mainly thanks to the extensive marketing program.

In a related development, General Electric Company (GE) has become the ninth partner of the IOC under the Olympic Partner (TOP) VI program. "This means GE and the other eight overseas companies will sponsor the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing," said Yuan Bin, BOCOG's deputy marketing chief, at the press conference. He continued that extreme commercialization would be avoided at the Games.

Karen Webb, an IOC marketing official added that some Chinese enterprises intend to become TOP partners,

but did not reveal their names.

According to Yuan, BOCOG will refer to five criteria when selecting sponsors: enterprises' development strategies should be consistent with Olympic development trends and BOCOG's ideals; enterprises should hold well-known brands as well as good public images; enterprises should have good records of supporting society, sports and culture; enterprises should have strong financial resources and be able to provide leading and reliable technologies or services; and enterprises should have solid images in the area of environmental protection.

Designs Solicited for Olympic Forest Park, Central Zone

By Hou Mingxin

Beijing is in the process of inviting architects from around the world to participate in competitions to design the landscapes of the Olympic Forest Park and Central Zone in the Olympic Green for the 2008 Games, the Beijing Urban Planning Commission

(BUPC) announced last Tuesday.

Outstanding design companies, firms or joint ventures with experience in urban planning, landscape planning and environmental engineering are invited to register for prequalification evaluations. Eight finalists will be chosen to participate

in the ultimate competition for the landscape design of the two areas.

A working group jointly established by BUPC, the Chaoyang District Government and the Beijing Landscape Bureau will oversee organization of the competition.

The 680-hectare Olympic Forest Park and 291-hectare Central Zone are important parts of the Olympic Green, which, located at the northern end Beijing's central axis, will be the core area for the 2008 Olympic Games.

ing significant news events under the name of the procuratorate and accepting media interviews.

Regular press conferences will be held by the procuratorate once every three months or whenever otherwise needed. Information released will include the body's plans, achievements and any significant crimes handled by the procuratorate.

The Supreme People's Procuratorate has also decided that all other domestic procuratorates should set up their own spokesperson systems.

According to Ma, the government is lifting controls as more multinationals are including China in their global purchasing networks and previous policies failed to meet their needs.

Foreign firms are allowed to establish Sino-foreign joint venture trade companies and solely-funded logistics companies in China to operate import and export businesses.

They can also export products they manufacture in China without export licenses or quotas. (Xinhua)

struction of the area have been estimated at around 1.2 billion yuan.

Besides funds from bank loans and government allocations, the growth of the area will require investment from companies and individuals.

Infrastructure construction projects covered by the regulation include roads, bridges, electricity, gas and heat supply, communications facilities and drainage.

Qualified individuals, whether from China or overseas, are welcome to be principal investors in the area's infrastructure.

The visas are valid for three months and allow holders to stay in Hong Kong or Macao for up to seven days at a time.

The central government is considering extending permission for individual travel to Hong Kong and Macao to permanent residents of Beijing, Shanghai and other cities in Guangdong, according to the *Beijing Youth Daily* report.

but if it was the latter, the amount would be unlimited," he explained.

He said that airline companies have considerable freedom in deciding compensation amounts in such cases, even though there are clauses on such amounts stipulated in the Warsaw Convention and the Hague Protocol. "In some air accidents, the compensation usually exceeds the stipulated limits of around US \$10,000 in the Warsaw Convention and \$16,600 in the Hague Protocol of 1955, out of concern for their reputation," he added.

He says the two international treaties must be referred to, as both China and Australia are parties to them. "Australian laws are also applicable in this case," Diao added. "Since the two parties failed to reach agreement, a judge hearing the case must follow precedents set in similar cases, and base any decision on how to apply the law on such precedents." He added that if the matter did in fact go to trial, it would be a complicated lawsuit, "as both international law and civil aviation law are involved."

Residence Permit Reforms Continue

By James Liu / Su Qiang

Five months have passed since the first group of 46 foreigners to get long-term residence permits received their three-to-five year "green cards" from the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau (BMPSB). Since then, less than 20 more people have been granted the extended permits, even though the latest figures from the bureau's Exit-Entry Administration show there are nearly 60,000 foreigners in the capital.

"Everyday we receive many inquiry calls and applications for the visas. However, most of the foreigners that call cannot provide the necessary documents or do not meet our standards," said Su Qiang, director of political department of the Exit-Entry Administration on Friday. "The reform measures are aimed at improving the convenience of this service and therefore promoting investment in the city."

The reform of foreign residence policy in China is a prelude to the nationwide implementation of a permanent residence system before 2005. As China generally does not receive immigrants, foreign residence has always been strictly controlled. Even just several years ago, people from overseas had to use their own currency, known as foreign exchange certificates, and until more recently were restricted to staying in designated hotels and residential areas.

In 2001, the Ministry of Public Security announced the introduction of an international "green card" system to grant foreigners permanent residence and other visa privileges. However, due to the lack of a systematic and transparent legal system, regional governments have adopted different standards for doling out the valuable certificates.

To match the new and improved residence permission measures, China will amend its laws on nationality and exit and entry procedures. "As a result, laws and policies regarding foreign residents will be integrated. We are now sorting out policies made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education on foreigners under their administrative systems," Su added.

The stiff application standards for the long-term permits have been the subject of criticism among the city's expats. Su explained, "Not only senior foreign managers and big investors can get the permits. Technicians and other experts can also enjoy this treatment."

As part of its overall reform efforts, the Beijing government will soon open all local kindergartens and primary and middle schools to foreign children and eliminate previous hotel restrictions, allowing overseas visitors to stay wherever they choose in the capital.

Foreigners qualified to apply for long term residence permits include:

1. Senior advisors working for the central government and Beijing Municipal government, senior managers and researchers working on key research items and projects at the state or provincial level;

2. Professionals or non-professionals who have made great contributions to the country or Beijing and foreigners working for the state or Beijing government under the no-payment aid project;

3. Chief researchers at state, provincial or local research institutes and people with associate professor or associate research fellow titles (and higher);

4. Deputy general managers (and higher), senior managers, and professionals in state-owned enterprises or institutions;

5. Senior management staff in foreign-invested companies in Beijing;

6. Individuals who have invested more than \$3 million in Beijing;

7. Foreign nationals of Chinese origin who have won important scientific awards or made achievements in other fields;

8. Chinese students who have studied abroad and returned to work in Beijing as senior management staff;

9. Spouses and children (under 18 years old) of the people listed above;

10. Foreigners studying on governmental scholarship in Beijing;

11. Chief representatives of foreign company branches in Beijing (can apply for under three-year permits);

12. Foreign employees in foreign invested companies and their spouses and children (can apply for under two-year permits); and

13. Professionals and management staff working in developing oil and natural gas in desert and offshore sites and their spouses and children (can apply for under three-year permits).

Supreme People's Procuratorate Gets First Voice

By Su Wei

A press conference held by the Supreme People's Procuratorate in Beijing on July 22 marked the public debut of Zhang Zhongfang, the body's new spokesman, and the launch of its spokesperson system, Xinhua reported last Thursday.

According to a statement issued by

the procuratorate, the system is aimed at improving transparency, publicizing the organization's work and responsibilities, strengthening public and media supervision, and expanding its social impact and ties with the general public.

The spokesperson's duties include holding press conferences, announc-

Foreign Firms Permitted to Set Up Purchasing Centers

Foreign companies will be allowed to set up solely-funded purchasing centers to buy products for overseas use in selected areas of China, Chinese Vice-Minister of Commerce Ma XiuHong announced Tuesday in Shanghai.

The State Council approved the policy and the Ministry of Commerce

has started work on the practical regulations, Ma said at a fair for cross-border purchasing opening.

Under the policy, foreign firms setting up purchasing centers in China can obtain export licenses and enjoy the same policies as domestic companies.

Individuals Allowed to Invest in Development Zone

By Guo Yuandan

The *Beijing Evening News* reported last Saturday that thanks to a new local government policy, individual investors are now allowed to put money into the continued construction of the Beijing Economic Technological Development Zone.

The new regulation, which clearly defines the rights and duties of

individual investors, is intended to encourage investment in infrastructure construction in the zone.

According to the report, the area of the zone will expand from 15.8 square kilometers to 39.8 square kilometers by the end of this year.

It is the first expansion of an economic and technological development area by the State Council.

The costs of second-phase con-

struction of the area have been estimated at around 1.2 billion yuan.

Besides funds from bank loans and government allocations, the growth of the area will require investment from companies and individuals.

Infrastructure construction projects covered by the regulation include roads, bridges, electricity, gas and heat supply, communications facilities and drainage.

Qualified individuals, whether from China or overseas, are welcome to be principal investors in the area's infrastructure.

Southerners Get OK for Travel to Hong Kong, Macao

By Guo Yuandan

Since Monday, permanent residents of Foshan, Dongguan, Zhongshan and Jiangmen in Guangdong province have been allowed to apply for visas for individual travel to

Hong Kong and Macao, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported on Tuesday.

To apply, residents of these four test cities, which have a total population of around 6.3 million, need only show their ID cards.

The visas are valid for three months and allow holders to stay in Hong Kong or Macao for up to seven days at a time.

The central government is considering extending permission for individual travel to Hong Kong and Macao to permanent residents of Beijing, Shanghai and other cities in Guangdong, according to the *Beijing Youth Daily* report.

but if it was the latter, the amount would be unlimited," he explained.

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He says the two international treaties must be referred to, as both China and Australia are parties to them. "Australian laws are also applicable in this case," Diao added. "Since the two parties failed to reach agreement, a judge hearing the case must follow precedents set in similar cases, and base any decision on how to apply the law on such precedents." He added that if the matter did in fact go to trial, it would be a complicated lawsuit, "as both international law and civil aviation law are involved."

Compensation Claim

(continued from page 1)

When *Beijing Today* sought comment from Qantas regarding its handling of the claim and the usual way in which international claims are handled, Sonya Sandham, corporate communication advisor, responsible for the matter, said she was unable to give any further details. "We do not provide details on individual customers," she stated. When asked if the Deed of Release was drawn up specially for Tao's claim, she replied, "It is a standard one."

Athula Pathinayake, lecturer at Deakin University Law School, Australia, points out that in situations like this, there can be valid claims such as the one made by Tao. "These claims are usually settled amicably," he added. "In such situations it is understandable that the liable party tries to get the best exemptions they can."

Diao Weimin, expert in aviation law and international law at the Civil Aviation Law Research

Center of China's Institute of Civil Aviation Management, comments, "None of the terms in the deed have broken laws or infringed on the couple's rights."

He highlighted that the deed is an offer made by Qantas to the couple, who have the right to accept it or not. "The way Qantas has sought to reach an agreement is in line with international practice, for the couple's attitude is unclear, though they agreed to the compensation amount," Diao said.

A question of sensitivity
Chen, of the CAAC, says it is good that Chinese people's awareness in regard to protecting their rights has been raised. "But sometimes being over-sensitive is not an efficient way to protect our rights, besides time, energy and money, there are other factors we need to think about," she suggested.

Diao Weimin points out that the major factor in determining the amount of compensation is whether the flight attendant caused Tao's injury as a result of carelessness, or did so maliciously. "If it was the former, the compensation would be limited,

but if it was the latter, the amount would be unlimited," he explained.

He said that airline companies have considerable freedom in deciding compensation amounts in such cases, even though there are clauses on such amounts stipulated in the Warsaw Convention and the Hague Protocol. "In some air accidents, the compensation usually exceeds the stipulated limits of around US \$10,000 in the Warsaw Convention and \$16,600 in the Hague Protocol of 1955, out of concern for their reputation," he added.

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Anti-dumping Investigation Launched on Imported Optical Fiber

By James Liu

China launched on July 1 an anti-dumping investigation into optical fiber imported from the US, Japan and South Korea, in response to an appeal from two domestic manufacturers to the Ministry of Commerce.

The investigation on the target product, which accounts for about 70 percent of all the optical fiber used in the world, is expected to last for one year and could be extended to 18 months if necessary.

Within the given 20 days after the investigation notice, a total of 12 exporters, including Corning of the US, Furukawa, Optomagic and LG of South Korea, have applied to the Fair Trading Office of Ministry of Commerce to respond to the charges.

These companies in the investigated countries should provide the quantity of the product exported to China during the dumping investigation term, and the production capacity, output, stock, plan of construction and extension, the quantity of the product exported to China during the term of investigation on damage to domestic industries. Then the ministry would decide whether

dumping has occurred, the level of dumping scope and the damage caused to the domestic industry.

Acting lawyer for the domestic manufacturers, He Jinghua from Bo Rong Law Firm, expressed confidence, saying "We at least have a 90 percent chance of winning the case." But PR manager of the biggest exporter, Corning (China), Wang Xiaozhong, denied the charge, saying, "The price of Corning's products in the market is the highest compared with local products. Can this be regarded as dumping?"

He Jinghua disagreed. "The price difference between Corning's products and local companies is within 20 yuan."

China Extends Anti-dumping Investigation

China Tuesday extended by six months the anti-dumping investigation on imported phenol made in Japan, South Korea, the United States and the Taiwan region.

The Chinese Ministry of Commerce said that the case, initiated on August 1, 2002, was more complex than other anti-dumping cases.

Based on Chinese anti-dumping regulations, the ministry decided to extend the investigation to February 1, 2004, its statement said. (Xinhua)

But this price is lower than that sold in US. This is a typical characteristic of dumping," he told *Beijing Today*.

Corning, however, presented a cautious attitude when speaking to the media. *Beijing Today* was told that the interview outline would be forwarded to chief general manager, Simon J. MacKinnon, and a "proper answer will be released". However, at the time of printing, *Beijing Today* had received no answer from the company.

But Corning was quick to mount a counter-challenge to the charge. Its joint venture companies in Beijing, Chengdu and Hong Kong have applied to the Import and Export Fair Trade Office of the Ministry of Commerce to

have the charge dropped, a move that was obviously unexpected by the Chinese manufacturers. "It will be more complicated and difficult to decide their dumping facts with these local companies helping the exporters," said an official of the Association of China Communication Enterprises, who declined to give his name.

"The quality of domestic companies products are equal to the imported. But the 11 domestic companies all suffer economic losses, as the imported fibers occupy 60 percent of the market," Zhang added. "So Yangtze Optical Fibre and Cable Company and Jiangsu Fasten Optical Fiber Company stood out to protect the industry."

According to the notice of the ministry, questionnaires, sampling, hearing and examination on the spot can be applied during the investigation. Last year, China imported US \$110 million worth of optical fiber from the United States, Japan and South Korea, according to the ministry. China imposed a five-year anti-dumping tax on imported South Korean-made polyester stable fiber with anti-dumping tax rate ranging from two to 48 percent since last February. Photo by Photocome

Tourism Industry Nervous at Overseas Rivals' Arrival

By Zhao Hongyi

Japanese travel agency Jal Pak obtained approval to open a wholly owned subsidiary in China last week. More travel agencies, like American Express Travel Services, Japan Travel Bureau and the European Tourism Commission are queuing for their chance. Market analysts say a fundamental adjustment is coming to China's over-crowded and inefficient tourism industry.

By the end of last year, China had 11,600 travel agencies, with 229,100 employees and a total revenue of 71 billion yuan, according to the China National Travel Administration. Among these, 1,300 have licenses to organize overseas tours and account for 92.15 percent of the industry's 1.2 billion yuan profit.

Most travel agencies at the county level or lower are used to receive tourists from larger travel agencies, instead of organizing business by themselves. "At least, over 1,000 local travel agencies have to die or disappear in the next few years," said Li Jinmao, vice chairman of China Association of Travel Services in an interview with *Beijing Today*.

To the medium sized agencies, usually between county level and provincial level, acquisition and market network building within their provinces is the most urgent task.

Guangzhou Travel Corporation is an example. The 20-year-old agency is the No. 1 now in Guangdong province, and has set up branches in Hong Kong and Macao to attract clients.

"Nationwide agencies, such as China Travel Services, China Youth Travel Services and China Comfort Travel Ser-



vices, have to acquire more domestic and local agencies to perfect their nationwide network for the competition with the foreign arrivals," said Li.

China Travel Services has already set up a joint venture with the American Express, China Comfort Travel Services (CCTS) established a joint venture with Rosenbluth International from the US as well.

Travel service is categorized into four types: inflow travel, referring to tourists visiting from abroad, external travel, referring to organizing overseas travel for Chinese citizens, domestic travel, referring to organizing travel within China for Chinese residents, and business travel.

For now, foreign agencies are restricted to offering inflow travel services, and can operate businesses in only one of the five cities opened, namely, Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Xi'an.

Zheng Hong, chairman of Guangzhou Travel Corporation believes the presence of foreign travel agencies will help introduce a standard level of practice to the domestic tourism industry.

"All the barriers will be brought down sooner or later," said Kang Yingzhang, section chief of CCTS, "Why can't we go abroad and attract tourists by ourselves?"

Overseas Real Estate Companies Eye Chinese Market

By Lily Li

After the People's Bank of China tightened control of real estate loans last month, domestic real estate companies are holding down expansion plans, overseas players, on the other hand, are hastening their entry into the market.

"We have recovered from the losses in the Chinese market and seen a small amount of profit during last year. China will be a main profit-contributor for the company in the next two years," said Liao Wenliang, CEO of Capital Land, the largest real estate group in Singapore.

According to Liao, the company made \$53.5 million in profits before taxation, 12 percent of which was from the Chinese market, compared to losses of \$5.2 million in China from the company's year 2001 financial report.

Liao said the business in China grew fast, with profits jumping to 20 percent of the company's total profits last year. "2,500 house sets in Beijing and 1,400 in Shanghai will go on sale in the next two years," he said, adding that the company's investment in Beijing and Shanghai will increase at double-digit rates.

Hong Kong real estate companies were the first group coming to the mainland market in the late 80's. So far they have had 411 projects in Beijing with a contract investment of \$8.87 billion, accounting for 72.3 percent of total investment by overseas funds.

European and American investors, although cautious about stepping into the real estate market, develop rapidly the business of architecture design and real estate agencies. At present, 140 of 225

big international project development companies have business in the mainland. Some 120 architecture design offices jointly funded by Chinese and overseas companies have been approved.

In accordance with WTO agreements, the Chinese government will allow overseas wholly funded companies to set up within three years. "Before the door completely opens, the best way for overseas investors to enter is to build joint venture funds with the property-related financial institutes in China," said Liang Bei, director of the Center for International Real Estate Research at the University of International Business and Economics.

In November 2002, Shouchuang Real Estate and ING Group from Holland jointly set up "China Real Estate Fund," the first one in the world directly aiming at the Chinese market. This fund has begun its first project in Beijing, called Pacific City.

Liang Bei said overseas investors in general bring 75 to 95 percent of funds when developing projects in China, while the domestic partner only contributes 5 to 25 percent. "According to a research report from JP Morgan, in the next two to three years, there'll be overseas funds worth \$0.3 to 2 billion pouring into the Chinese real estate market," she said.

So far, more than 5,000 real estate companies are jointly funded by overseas investors, accounting for 20 percent of the total amount, and almost 4 billion yuan have been invested in China. It is expected that in the next five years, overseas investment in the real estate industry will reach \$358 billion, with an annual increase rate of seven percent.



UA Flights to China Back to Normal

By Zhao Hongyi

United Airlines restored its number of flights to China this week to pre-SARS levels. The airline had cut the number of flights to 14 due to the SARS epidemic.

Of the 21 flights, 14 are between Beijing and the US while the other seven are to Shanghai.

In addition, UA announced it was increasing its number of ticket-selling outlets to 200, giving it a presence in almost every provincial capital. The new program goes into effect in the middle of August. UA established its sales system in cooperation with China's TravelSky Technology, a nationwide air ticket inquiry and purchasing system.

After a number of successful financial borrowings, the airline, which was reportedly close to bankruptcy, is getting back to normal business, thanks to the slow recovery of the global air transportation industry.

Meanwhile, UA China general manager Sidney Kwok confirmed to the local media that UA has always been keen to enter China's air transportation industry, either by share acquisition or joint venture. "It brings benefit to China's air transportation industry," said Kwok.

Korea's Woori Bank Opens Branch in Beijing

By James Liu

Woori Bank, South Korea's second-largest commercial bank, opened its second Chinese branch in Beijing on July 24, following the establishment of its first branch in Shanghai in 1995.

The Beijing branch, which is located in Hyundai Millennium Tower, will provide various banking services, including deposits, loans and one-day remittances, for South Korean companies investing in China. It is also the first South Korean bank that opened in China under the newly issued regulations on foreign finance institutions after the Asian economic crisis in 1997.

President of the financial holding company, Lee Duk-hoon, said the bank would open more branches in other cities in China, such as Dalian, Qingdao, Shenyang and Guangzhou. Woori bank has signed full cooperation contract with Industrial and Commercial Bank of China and Bank of China in 2001 and 2002 respectively.

Cuba Approved as Tourism Destination

By Zhao Hongyi

China and Cuba signed a memorandum of understanding last week, allowing Chinese travel groups to visit the Caribbean country.

Cuba is the first country in the western hemisphere to gain Approved Destination Status (ADS) from the Chinese government. The country has 1,600 islands and tourism is an important industry.

The number of Chinese travelers going abroad has risen, surpassing 16 million last year. The World Tourism Organization predicts China will become the fourth largest tourist source by 2020.

So far, 28 nations and regions have obtained the status and China allows its citizens to visit 24 of them, including Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, South Korea, Japan, New Zealand, Australia, Hong Kong and Macao.



When Blenz Meets Starbucks

By Zhao Hongyi

Blenz, a coffee retailing group based in Vancouver, Canada, entered the Chinese market last week, launching three outlets in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou.

Sunny Bai, president of Blenz China Coffee Holdings, told local Chinese media her group will develop in China by granting brand use to qualified local investors, with highly critical qualification requirements. The ambitious president expects there could be 40 Blenz outlets in China by the end of this year and 100 by 2004.

Blenz's entry into China's market brings competition to Starbucks from the US. Though Starbucks has reportedly met operational difficulties in the US and Japan, it is still in a rapid expansion in China. Starbucks insists on opening outlets in China itself, rather than in cooperation with local investors.

Goldman Sachs Granted QFII Status

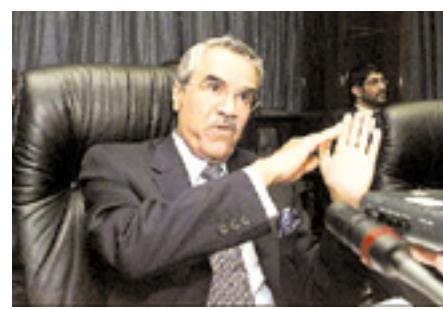
Goldman Sachs was granted a \$50 million investment line as a qualified foreign international investor (QFII) this week by China's State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE).

SAFE also ratified Morgan Stanley International to open a QFII RMB account in the Shanghai Branch of HSBC. Morgan Stanley was granted a QFII investment line of 300 million dollars earlier this month.

Other qualified investors approved by SAFE are USB, CitiGroup International, Nomura Securities. Total investment line approved to the five QFIIs amounts to \$775 million.

(Xinhua)

Shell, Total Granted Major Gas Contract



Saudi oil minister Ali al-Nuaimi reveals the deal with Shell and Total. AFP Photo

Riyadh, July 16 (AFP) - OPEC kingpin Saudi Arabia has granted a major gas exploration and production project to a consortium of Royal Dutch/Shell and Total.

The project covers an area of 200,000 sq km in the Rub al-Khali (Empty Quarter) in the south of the vast oil-rich kingdom. Oil Minister Ali al-Nuaimi was quoted as saying Wednesday by the official SPA news agency.

"This project is an important step

and a powerful launch of international investments in the gas exploration and production operations in the kingdom," Nuaimi said.

Nuaimi added that a large number of oil companies from the US, Europe, Japan, India, Russia and China had been invited to a meeting in London on July 22 and 23 to discuss new gas projects to be offered by his ministry.

The ministry will offer through a specific timetable other promising areas to international oil firms on a clear competitive and transparent basis" that fulfills the kingdom's interests in natural gas exploration and production, he said.

The deal with Shell and Total follows close on the heels of the collapse of the Saudi Natural Gas Initiative (NGI) in its integrated form which included power, water and petrochemical projects in addition to gas exploration and production.

The NGI was launched in 1999 by Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz,

Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler, to boost the kingdom's production of non-associated natural gas which would be used as fuel for power, water and petrochemical plants.

Saudi Arabia, which sits atop the world's biggest oil reserves, has proven natural gas reserves of 224 trillion cubic feet (6.6 trillion cubic meters).

Current gas production in the kingdom is around six billion cubic feet daily but is due to be around 10 billion cubic feet (283.1 million cubic metres) per day by 2010.

Analyst's Take:

Saudi Arabia has huge natural gas deposits, but lacks the necessary technology and capital, estimated at \$100 billion in the coming decade, for exploration.

Due to political and economic factors, Middle East countries are dropping the state monopolies on oil and gas exploration imposed in the 1970s. This provides

an opportunity for China to find a stable and sustainable oil and gas supply, if we can manage the case well.

— **Chao Heping, vice chairman, Institute of Economic Studies, Beijing University**

Politically, a long term US military presence in Iraq will bring the US values of democracy to the region. Saudi Arabia has an unclear connection with the al Qaeda terrorist network. This makes the royal family worried about a possible loss of control over the country.

The royal family hopes a market can open up which can balance the benefits among major powers and protect it from collapse.

Economically, Saudi Arabia wants to use natural gas to replace oil consumption and spare the oil for export. It aims to maintain its No. 1 position in OPEC and protect the cartel's position in the world.

— **Tong Fuquan, researcher of world economics and politics, Chinese Academy of Social Science**

EU-US GM Food Spat Continues

Brussels, July 22 (AFP) - European Agriculture ministers have officially adopted new rules on the labeling of genetically modified (GM) food products.

The decision opens the way for the EU to lift its ban on GM products, which has been in place since 1999.

That moratorium has been challenged by the United States, which has officially complained to the World Trade Organization.

The green light by EU ministers comes after the European Parliament in Strasbourg on July 2 voted in favor of two directives requiring food and animal feed to be labeled if it contains at least 0.9 percent of GM ingredients.

The European Union had hoped the agreement would lead the United States to drop its complaint to the WTO, but a US official said on July 2 that Washington would not abandon the WTO complaint, saying the new EU legislation will make the issue more complicated, not less.

Consumer groups have welcomed the EU measure, saying the vast majority of ordinary people want proper labeling of GM food products.

Opinion polls suggest that European consumers are deeply suspicious of so-called "Frankenfoods". But the US government has been lobbying hard for GM products on behalf of its biotechnology food industry.

Advocates of GM foods argue that modifications to genes allowing, for example, resistance to certain pests, could greatly increase yields and alleviate global hunger.

However opponents say the technology is being pushed forwards by big corporations without sufficient knowledge as to how GM plants might affect the rest of the environment.

Analyst's Take:

The impact of GM agricultural products on human beings is still unclear, because the discovery, uses and fruits of the technology came out too quickly, particularly in the US. Scientists believe it takes three to four generations to trace the impact.

From the angle of public administration, these new products should be used in experiments and at the consumers' own wishes.

The GM product-rich US is trying to force the EU to open the market. In countering back, the EU promised to reduce agricultural subsidies from next year and has urged the US to take the same step.

Therefore, all the debates over the consumption of and market opening to GM products are just part of the game for the different parties' own markets and benefits.

— **Wang Jun, director, Institute of Social Philosophy of Science and Technology, Peking University**

Scientific research has proved that all the licensed GM foods on the market have no negative impact on human health.

Therefore, the debate between the EU and the US is market interests oriented, because once the EU opens its market to the tremendous GM food products industry from the US, it will have a huge impact on the already fragile EU agriculture industry.

Frankly speaking, the EU has made a concession to the US this time. But it is far from a complete concession. It is like "cracking down the fence and building another wall behind". The EU raised more technical barriers after it promised to open the market to GM food products from the US.

— **Feng Quanpu, commentator, PhD, Institute of International Relations**



Syringe in a corn ear symbolizing genetically modified (GM) organisms. AFP Photo



Beetles Drive off in Mexico

Mexico City, July 30 (AFP) - To the accompaniment of a mariachi band and workers' applause, the last Volkswagen-licensed Beetle car to be built in Mexico rolled off the assembly line, marking the end of a 39-year tradition.

The Puebla Beetle represents the

21,529,464th such Beetle to be built worldwide. The first Beetles were produced in Germany in 1935.

In Mexico, Beetles have long been used as taxis. The green painted bug has become a symbol of Mexico City, the country's capital. Xinhua Photo

Western Tourism Industry Finds Promising Market in "New Europe"

Vienna, July 21 (AFP) - Long confined behind the iron curtain, "new Europeans" are striking out in millions to vacations abroad, and spending on vacations abroad, said Luigi Cabrini, European representative at the Madrid-based World Tourism Organization.

Whether in buses, cars, ferries or planes, the citizens of formerly communist nations are discovering European capitals and the beaches of the Mediterranean and the Adriatic that had been unaccessible for them for decades.

Though the tourism market is not yet lucrative, large travel companies like TUI and Thomas Cook have recently established footholds in the region.

The "new tourists" - from five central European nations and three Baltic states that will join the European Union in May - still only spend some 500 to 1,000 euros (565 to 1,130 dollars) per person on a short vacation, but tourism offi-

cials say this is bound to change.

"All of our statistics show a direct correlation between the gross domestic product per person and spending on vacations abroad," said Luigi Cabrini, European representative at the Madrid-based World Tourism Organization.

Some 4.4 million Poles, 14 percent of the population above the age of 15, went abroad for their vacations in 2002.

More than one in five Czechs did the same in 2001, according to the latest figures of the tourism institute in Prague, with Croatia their number one destination.

Hungarians also prefer Croatia, with the top Hungarian domestic tourist destination - Lake Balaton - now pricier than Croatia's scenic Adriatic coast.

"These countries (of central Europe) have a big potential and we are interested in them," said

Markus Ruediger, spokesman for Thomas Cook based in Oberursel, Germany.

Charter flights are also making inroads in central Europe, with Czechs, Poles, Slovaks or Slovenians taking planes from the Canary Islands to Egypt and Tunisia.

In the early 1990s, Estonians - the richest of the three Baltic nations - were content to hop on the ferry to visit neighboring Finland. Now, Estonians hop on the plane to escape their colder climate and have become regular visitors to Turkey, Greece and Cyprus.

Tourists from Bulgaria and Romania - the poorest of the candidate countries that are slated to join the European Union in 2007 - received only in 2001 the right to travel to EU nations without visas.

OPEC Expects to Keep Output the Same

Vienna, Austria, July 30 (AP) - OPEC's president joined oil ministers from several of the cartel's member countries Wednesday in reinforcing expectations that they won't change crude output when meeting to reassess a market that seems to be going all their way.

OPEC, supplier of a third of the world's crude, has an official production ceiling of 25.4 million barrels a day. Tight oil inventories in the United States and other importing nations have strengthened OPEC's market position. The price for OPEC's benchmark blend of crudes is at around \$28 a barrel.

(Bruce Stanley)

Citigroup, JP Morgan Fined for Enron's Fraud

New York, July 28 (Reuters) - Citigroup Inc. and J.P. Morgan Chase & Co. paid \$305 million to settle charges by security and law enforcement officials that they helped Enron Corp. cheat investors out of billions of dollars.

The probe found that Citigroup and J.P. Morgan Chase structured complex deals that allowed energy trader Enron to hide debt and inflate its cash flow before it filed for bankruptcy protection in late 2001. The banks neither admitted nor denied the charges as part of the agreement.

(Chris Sanders and Paul Thomasch)

Seven More US Airlines

Get OK to Fly to Iraq

Washington, July 29 (AP) - Seven more airlines have been given permission to begin scheduled flights between the United States and Iraq.

The US Transportation Department approved applications to fly cargo for five airlines: Air Transport International, Gemini Air Cargo, Evergreen International Airlines, Atlas Air and Polar Air Cargo. Two others, North American Airlines and Continental Airlines, were given permission to fly cargo and passengers.

In June, transportation officials gave the go-ahead to World Airways, Northwest Airlines and Kalitta Air to fly between the United States and Iraq.

Merrill Lynch Fined \$900,000

New York, July 30 (Reuters) - The New York Stock Exchange fined Merrill Lynch & Co \$900,000 for failing to properly supervise a branch office in Florida where a broker racked up big losses with clients' money.

The NYSE said its disciplinary action against Merrill stems from about 200 customer complaints involving more than 550 separate accounts held by former Merrill broker Tania Torruella.

Torruella worked at Merrill's office in Winter Park, Florida, between August 1999 and July 2001. She put "significant portions" of her customers' assets into technology, telecommunications and Internet stocks, the NYSE said.

(Greg Cresci)



A National Printing Bureau worker shows a sample of Japan's new 10,000 yen (\$84) notes at the bureau's plant in Tokyo July 29, 2003. The new bills, featuring anti-counterfeiting features including holograms and advanced bar-coding, will be issued from July 2004.

Reuters Photo

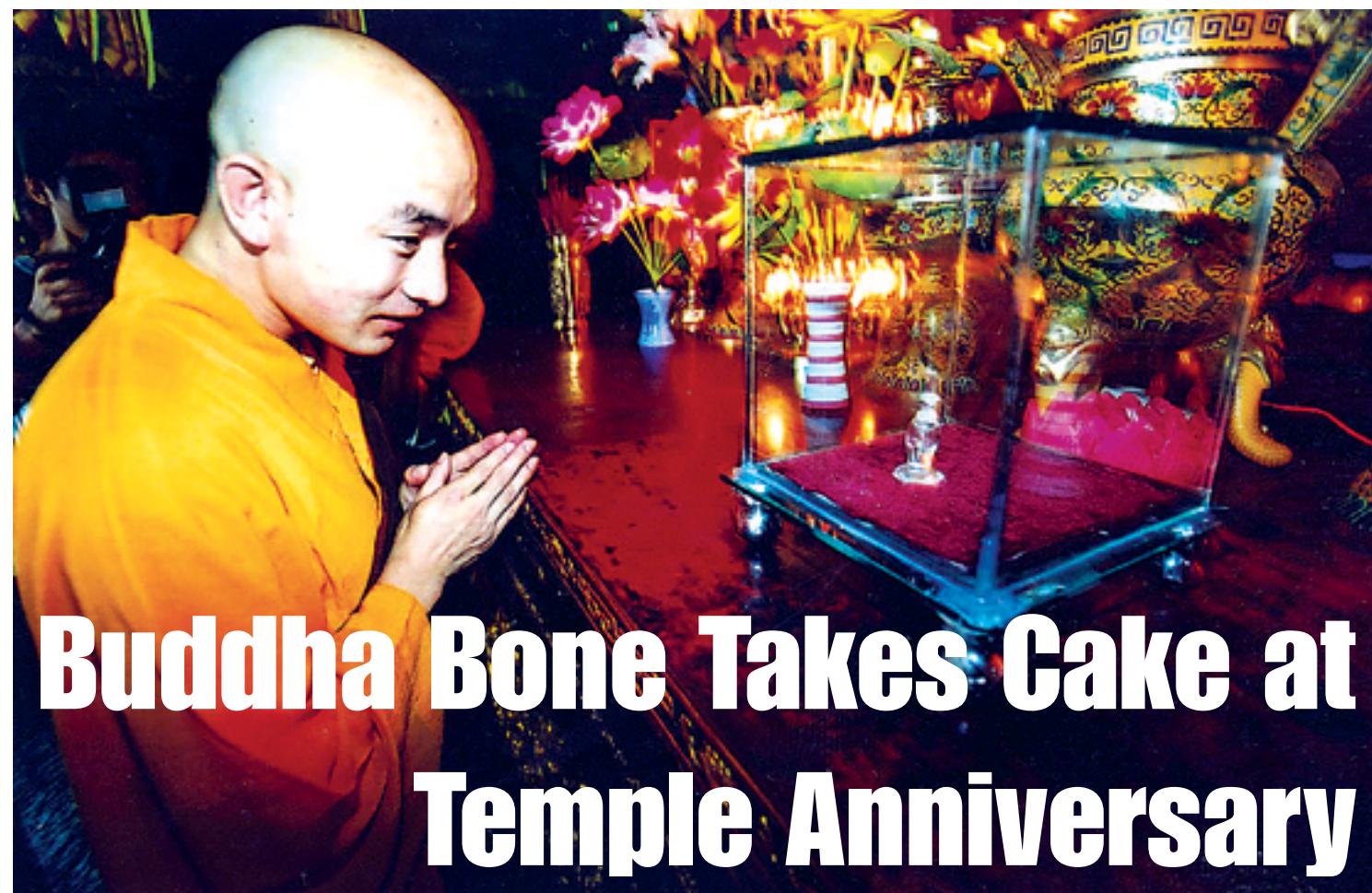
Japan to Issue New Bank Notes

Tokyo, July 29 (Dow Jones Newswires) - The Japanese Finance Ministry said it will print a combined Y2.15 billion of Y1,000, Y5,000 and Y10,000 notes during this fiscal year ending March 31. The new notes will go into circulation before July 1 next year.

The ministry added it would likely take about two years for the new bank notes to replace the current 10.5 billion notes in circulation, excluding the 400 million Y2,000 notes.

This will be the first major overhaul of the bank notes since 1984. The introduction of the new bank notes, however, will symbolize Japan's efforts to rebuild the economy through structural reform, the finance minister said.

(Miyako Takebe)



Buddha Bone Takes Cake at Temple Anniversary

By Iris Miao

On Tuesday, ancient Tanzhe Temple in Mentougou District kicked off celebrations of its auspicious 1,696th anniversary, but the main event came two days before when the temple received a treasured *sarira*, a small remainder from the body of the original Buddha himself. The tiny bone fragment was put in a shrine on the second floor where the temple houses sutras bestowed

by emperors of China's imperial past.

The rice-shaped white *sarira*, discovered on June 3, 1990 at the Tiankai Pagoda in Hancunhe in Fangshan District, Beijing, will be shown to the public at the temple for 108 days.

The temple's anniversary celebration will include other activities, such as exhibitions of portraits of abbots from the Qing Dynasty and paintings from the flourishing

era under Qing emperors Kangxi to Qianlong (1662-1795) and martial arts performances by young monks.

Tanzhe Temple has long been a major attraction in the capital's southwestern suburbs, but exactly when it was built, where its name came from and other aspects of its history remain mysteries.

The celebration will run until November 2.

Photo by Cui Jun

Chinese Dinosaur Abducted in Australia

By James Liu

The skeleton of a 110 million-year-old dinosaur found in China was stolen from the Newcastle Regional Museum in New South Wales, Australia on July 20. The security windows at the museum were smashed in the early morning and thieves managed to remove the remains of the parrot-beaked *psittacosaurus sinensis* from its display stand and escape before police arrived.

The 60-centimeter-tall dinosaur skeleton, together with more than 50 other sets of dinosaur bones and birds fossils, was on loan from the Beijing Natural History Museum as part of a travelling exhibition touring Australia. The theft took place one day before the dinosaur show was scheduled to end in Newcastle.

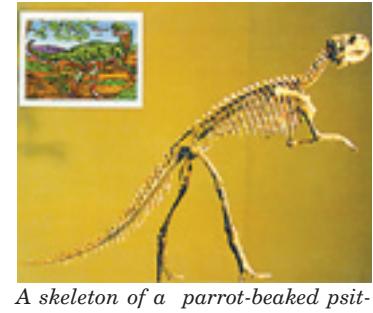
John Long, an Australian dinosaur expert, expressed concern over the fate of the Chinese dinosaur, because "there is demand and a black market for fossils in Australia," as quoted in a report in *Beijing Youth Daily* on Tuesday.

"If the museum and police fail to find the fossil within one month, US \$40,000 will be paid to the Beijing Natural His-

tory Museum as compensation in keeping with an insurance policy taken out by the New South Wales government," said Li Jianjun, the coordinator of the traveling exhibition, in Beijing. He added that the museum has other *psittacosaurus* fossils, but would not specify how many in an interview on Tuesday with *Beijing Today*. "It's not of great monetary value, tens of thousands of dollars rather than millions, but its scientific value is undisputed," said Li.

He Fengxiang, director of the Beijing Natural History Museum, said, "Nobody wants to see such incidents happen. We would rather have the fossil back than the money."

The Newcastle Regional Museum has offered a reward of AU \$5,000 dollars (US \$3,300) for the fossil's return.



A skeleton of a parrot-beaked *psittacosaurus sinensis*

Retiree Files Suit for 45-Minute Wait

By Su Wei / Zhang Yuezhen

A lawsuit lodged by Yang Lirong, a retired worker, against star comedian Huang Hong and the Beijing Book Building is set to be heard soon by the Xicheng People's Court. Yang is suing the defendants for keeping him and other customers waiting for 45 minutes when a scheduled book signing and sales activity was delayed.

Yang recalled that when he went to the large bookstore near Xidan at around 9 am on June 28, he saw a sign that Huang would be appearing on the fourth floor to sign his new book *Remember - Huang Hong's Atypical Diary* at 10:30 am. "I paid 19.55 yuan to buy the book and then got in line to get it signed at around 10:10 am," he said.

When the author had not appeared at 10:40 am, "people standing in line began to complain," Yang added. "Huang arrived at 10:55, but didn't start signing books immediately. Instead, he and some other person gave speeches for about 20 minutes."

Yang insists he suffered

economic and spiritual losses because of the delay, and is demanding a total of 100 yuan in compensation and a public apology from the two defendants.

When *Beijing Today* called Huang on July 28, he said he was not interested in giving details about the case. "It's a lawsuit, so it can only be solved by the law," he stated.

Liang Shengchun, marketing director of Beijing Book Building, said the store was only responsible for providing the venue for the activity. "The Oil Industry Publishing House was in charge of contacting Huang," he added. "When we were informed that Huang was going to be late due to a traffic jam, we told our customers without delay. We thought everyone understood, since the activity generally went quite well."

Yang told *Beijing Today* that he did not file the suit in order to cause trouble for the store or for Huang. "I think consumers sometimes are in a disadvantaged position. I just wanted to stand up and speak for such people," he said.

have no hope of living."

According to Gu, Wei took off before he had any chance to explain why he could not take the money. "I know that stores do not have the right to fine customers," he added.

Gu said that Wei came back later and asked for a signed written statement that he had only stolen one ice cream. "He then took some money and ran away," he noted.

The guard recalled that Wei only bought one bottle of alcohol from the supermarket. "I stopped him from burning himself the first time, but when he did it again, I only managed to kick the bottle of gas away and then called my colleagues to help put out the fire." A few people, including Gu, other store employees and a bus driver, put Wei out with fire extinguishers.

"I did it without thinking. It was the first time I had ever taken something from someone else. I know I did wrong, but I really am in dire financial straits," Wei later told *Beijing Today*.

The hospital is currently trying to locate his family, but the young man has so far not been cooperative. According to a report in the *Beijing Morning Post*, Wei has indicated to the hospital that if he dies, he would like to donate his organs for medical research.

Society Comes to Aid of One Poor Student

By Guo Yuandan

The plight of a poor young woman in Hunan Province has caught the attention of the country in the past few weeks.

Qin Jianyan, 19, got good marks on the national university entrance examination and was admitted to Beijing University on July 17. For her parents, acceptance to that university was exciting and worrying, as they do not have the financial resources to cover their daughter's tuition.

The Qins live in a poor, remote village and eke out a living as farmers. The 7,500 yuan annual tuition at Beijing University is far beyond their means.

After the Hunan-based *Xiaoxiang Morning Post* reported Qin's story on July 21, many people from around China and as far away as the US expressed intention to help her in her quest for higher education. Even Jiang Zhenghua, vice president of the Standing Committee of the National Party Congress has decided to get involved.

"Qin is a lucky girl. With so many

people's help, she will complete her college studies. But most other students in my class still face very difficult situations," Xiao Yanshun, one of Qin's high school teachers, told *Beijing Today* last Friday.

Over 70 percent of Qin's classmates could not afford their fees at the Yongshun First Middle School. According to Xiao, "Qin's case was not among the worst. Eleven students couldn't pay for their fees at all, and I covered them. Forty-six of my students were admitted to university, but 30 percent of those need financial aid. I hope people will step forward to help them as well."

The situation in Qin's village is not unusual in rural China. "The ranks of poor students are increasing," said Wang Peng, director of the New Great Wall project of the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation.

Under the New Great Wall project, that foundation will provide 10,001 poor students nationwide with 2,000 yuan to help cover their university tuition fees for the coming semester.

Enterprising Grad Starts Own Business

By Su Wei

Just one week after graduating from Capital Normal University, Xiao Yuxin, 22, received a license to operate a private musical instrument store last Tuesday. He is the first person from this year's crop of local graduates to start his own business, and also the first individual to benefit from fee reductions implemented this year to encourage young entrepreneurs.

In June, the State Industrial and Commercial Administration Bureau negated fees for enterprise registration, market management, and purchasing and receiving approval for contracts normally charged by local authorities for recent graduates in their first year of private business.

"Xiao probably will end up saving around 2,000 yuan in operating fees in his store's first year," said Wang Yingyue, vice director of the Supervision Management Department of the Beijing Industrial and Commercial Administration Bureau, Xicheng Bureau.

The small store is located in an apartment building behind the Wantong Commodity Market in



Xiao Yuxin receives his business license.
Photo by Zhao Quan

Fuchengmen, Xicheng District. In order to establish his business, Xiao took out a loan of 100,000 yuan from a local bank.

When asked whether he has considered the possibility of his business going belly up, Xiao quickly responded, "I have thought about it, and the worst that could happen would be I lose money. In that case, I'd find a job and pay off the loan."

Love for Sale

By Hans Leu

Man's best friends and other furry companions will be on sale on Saturday at the first pet auction ever in Beijing at the Guodu Pet Park near Lishuiqiao in Chaoyang District.

Some of the proceeds earned at the auction will go towards rescuing pets, mostly dogs, abandoned by skittish owners during the SARS outbreak.

First, people from all over town will pawn off their pets, with earnings donated to the China Small Animal Protect Association

to provide refuge for exiled animals. Afterwards, premium breed dogs, cats, fish and pigeons will be shown and then auctioned.

Li Yuan, a park employee and one of the organizers of the auction, said that many pet dogs ended up innocent victims of panic this spring following false rumors they could spread the SARS virus. He expects that when many people look back at that time, they will regret the knee-jerk abandonment of their "best friends".

Park managers have announced that if the event goes as well as expected, they may make such pet auctions regular activities.

When Is an Egg Not an Egg?

By Hou Yijun / Zhao Hongyi

health unless somehow consumed in large quantities.

Sophisticated facilities and a significant effort were required to produce these fake eggs, particularly their shells, which have a more polished look than the real items.



Can you spot the fake?
Photo by Wang Zhenlong

Shoplifter Sets Self on Fire

By Su Wei

After being caught shoplifting an ice cream bar from a local supermarket last Tuesday, Wei Mingjun, a 26-year-old man from Inner Mongolia, took the desperate measure of burning himself in front of the store.

The act left Wei alive, but with serious burns on his head, arms and torso. He is currently in improving condition after one week of treatment at the Beijing No.292 Hospital. However, surgeons say his life is still in danger if he does not receive skin graft operations, which could cost as much as 100,000 yuan.

Last Friday, after Wei's suicide attempt outside the Meifuyuan Supermarket in Panjiayuan, Chaoyang District, *Beijing Today* visited him at the hospital.

Unable to speak due to a tracheotomy he had received the day before, Wei communicated by writing notes. He wrote he came to Beijing on July 1 in search of employment but was not able to find a job. "Of the 200 yuan I took from home, I only had around 100 yuan," he scrawled.

"I felt thirsty when I was in the supermarket. I first took an ice cream priced at 1.5 yuan from a freezer. When I took a second one, a supermarket employee told me

to go upstairs with him," he continued.

The store employee demanded he turn over 100 yuan as a fine, and Wei agreed. "I told him that I had almost no money, and begged him to drop the fine to 10 yuan, but he refused," he wrote. "I said, 'If you don't give me the money back, I'll die,' but he ignored me."

Wei continued that he then bought a bottle of *ergoutou*, a strong spirit, at the market and tried to use it to set himself on fire at the door. "The staff member stopped me, so I bought two bottles of gasoline and lit myself," he wrote. "He stopped me in vain."

The security guard involved, Gu Yongli, told *Beijing Today* he saw Wei took two ice cream bars from the supermarket's refrigerator and put one into his pocket. "When he went to leave, I asked him where the other ice cream was. He first said he put it on a shelf, but later took it out from his pocket," he said.

Gu added that after they went to the upstairs office and before he said a word, Wei stated he was willing to receive punishment. "He gave me 10 yuan, but I said no," Gu recalled. "He then took out a whole wad of money, threw it on the table and ran downstairs. He shouted, 'Without money, I

have no hope of living.'"

According to Gu, Wei took off before he had any chance to explain why he could not take the money. "I know that stores do not have the right to fine customers," he added.

Gu said that Wei came back later and asked for a signed written statement that he had only stolen one ice cream. "He then took some money and ran away," he noted.

The guard recalled that Wei only bought one bottle of alcohol from the supermarket. "I stopped him from burning himself the first time, but when he did it again, I only managed to kick the bottle of gas away and then called my colleagues to help put out the fire." A few people, including Gu, other store employees and a bus driver, put Wei out with fire extinguishers.

"I did it without thinking. It was the first time I had ever taken something from someone else. I know I did wrong, but I really am in dire financial straits," Wei later told *Beijing Today*.

The hospital is currently trying to locate his family, but the young man has so far not been cooperative. According to a report in the *Beijing Morning Post*, Wei has indicated to the hospital that if he dies, he would like to donate his organs for medical research.

Later analysis showed the eggs were not magic, they were completely man-made.

Wang sent the impostor eggs to *Beijing Youth Daily*, and then reporter Hou Yijun forwarded them to the food chemistry laboratory of Renmin University for analysis.

The astonishing results showed the completely synthetic eggs had shells made of calcium carbonate and gypsum, yolks formed of resin, dye and coagulant, and whites made of cornstarch and another kind of resin.

In the past several days, the artificial eggs have been discovered in a number of supermarkets in Beijing and Tianjin. The Renmin University scientists said that the eggs should not be harmful to

The New Era of Living Together

Jiangsu Province relaxes law preventing unmarried men and women living together

By Chen Ying / Su Wei

The legislators probably thought it would be a popular move. Instead, they stirred up an intense national debate.

The 10th Standing Committee of Jiangsu Province People's Congress held its third meeting at the end of June. During the meeting, the committee revised and passed the modification to Jiangsu Province Temporary Resident Population Management Ordinance.

The most noticeable change was the canceling of a ban on men and women living together without a marriage certificate.

According to a report in *China Youth Daily*, all the members of the committee supported the move.

The new ordinance was put into practice on July 10.

Sun Rulin, Judiciary Office Director of Jiangsu Province People's Government says there is no sufficient legal basis for forbidding men and women from living together if they do not have a marriage certificate.

The ordinance was passed in 1994 for the sake of controlling prostitution and the drug industry.

"It was a local regulation and was made under certain historical conditions," he said. "But according to legal principles, any behavior that is not forbidden by law should be regarded as being allowed by law and the government should not interfere. So the clause must be deleted."

Sun Rulin said it was difficult to define the relationship between men and women when they do not have a marriage certificate. "The range of non-married men and women is so wide. It includes fathers and daughters, mothers and sons, as well as brothers and sisters. It's ridiculous if they cannot live together."

"Also there is no clear definition of 'living together'. No one knows if it refers to living in one room or one apartment. In some cities, men and women can rent an apartment without violating any laws," he adds.

He says the police also think it is hard for them to put such a clause into practice. "Police can interrogate and punish people if they run a prostitute business or take drugs. But they cannot simply assume that men and women living together are running a brothel. It's just like it would be unreasonable to close all hotels because crimes happened in some of them."

But the modification aroused nationwide attention. Some people supported the change thinking it emphasized personal rights while others worried it could encourage social ills, such as more unmarried people living together.

There are similar ordinances in different areas. How to deal with the situation is not consistent nationwide. "I believe some better developed areas like Jiangsu will cancel such clauses gradually while other local governments may even take tougher measures to strengthen them," said Wang Taiyuan, associate professor from China's Public Security University.

According to Beijing Migrant People House Rental Public Security Management Rules, a warranty must be signed promising to prevent unmarried men and women renting the same room.

'It is right and necessary to crack down on prostitutes and those visiting prostitutes. But regulations such as prohibiting men and women from living together without marriage certificates cannot be considered effective to control and diminish social darkness. Under certain conditions, a bad law is much worse than not having a law.'

— Wang Taiyuan

But true to Chinese traditions, many people, especially the elderly, cannot accept the idea of unmarried people living together. Nevertheless, it's becoming more popular in younger generations. "I want to rent an apartment with others to save money. I don't care if I share with boys or girls," said Xie Fei, a 22-year-old Beijing girl, who has just graduated from college.

But Sun Rulin also says the change mainly focuses on apartment renting. Men and women who want to share a hotel room will still need to show their marriage certificate.

Song Yan, an ordinary Beijinger, felt very embarrassed and angry when she and her husband spent their weekend in a holiday village near Beijing a few years ago. At that time, she had been pregnant for months. "The police knocked on our door and asked my husband to show our marriage certificate when we were just about to go to bed. But who carries the certificate with them everywhere they go? Fortunately, it was obvious that I was pregnant. Otherwise, we might have been detained."

Jiangsu has made its first step in managing the apartment housing issue. But people still wonder when a similar change will take place with hotels. Is such change a kind of social progress or a step backwards? Opinions follow:

Xia Xueluan, professor of the Sociology Department, Beijing University

Abolishing the clause is part of the transitional stage of social development. During this time, it is inevitable that it will cause a sensational reaction around the country.

Some people think it's an issue of privacy. Choosing who I want to live with is my right. It's my own business.

And others will think this is China. We have our own cultural values and ways of judging behavior. So we should concentrate on ways to control prostitution.

Wang Taiyuan, associate professor of Social Security Department, China's Public Security University

The deleting of the clause that men and women are prohibited from living together if they do not have a marriage certificate may appear to be a back-

wards step but in fact it represents progress in China's judicial construction process.

It is right and necessary to crack down on prostitutes and those visiting prostitutes. But regulations such as prohibiting men and women from living together without marriage certificates cannot be considered effective to control and diminish social darkness. Under certain conditions, a bad law is much worse than not having a law.

Wang Xingjian, the founder of Beijing Hongfeng Hotline, the country's first women's consultation hotline

Many people will worry such a change will encourage married people to consider affairs. In my mind, the most important thing is to improve marriage quality and advocate loyalty in couples.

The former regulation cannot stop affairs from happening and it also contravenes private rights. People have the right to get married or not. Some people would rather live together instead of getting married. It's their own business and others haven't the right to interfere.

Athula Pathinayake, Law School lecturer, Deakin University, Australia

From what I could see, there are two aspects to this story. One is marriage and the other is living together.

The concept of marriage is very subjective. It can vary due to society, And culture but the basic concept of marriage is universal. Butterworths Australian Legal Dictionary (1977) defines marriage as "the union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life."

The next question is what is living together? Is it what law defines as a relationship or just two people living together for various other reasons such as siblings, relatives or friends?

Will this change lead to extra marital activities? Again there are many arguments for and against. We should look into the practicalities of this. How can one come to the conclusion that "living together" will encourage prostitution or any other socially unacceptable behavior?

Society is changing rapidly and people's needs are different. The traditional views or ideas need to change in line with the needs of the people.

Ed Lanfranco, UPI Bureau Chief in Beijing

I think the Jiangsu government's decision to decriminalize cohabitation is a small but highly significant step in the right direction for personal freedom of choice and individual rights in China.

What people do within a domicile is their own business, provided it does not involve criminal behavior. It should not be a crime simply for two people of different genders to live in the same place.

Living together under the same roof does not automatically mean an illicit relationship is taking place. There are ties of blood (siblings, cousins), geographic affinity (coming from the same village), and economic reasons (lessening the burden of rent), none of which are immoral.

A free society is one flexible enough to permit a wide range of decision making in the hands of the individual, not the government.

SOUND BITES

"To my knowledge, these online translators and the fans supporting them are actually firm supporters of the authentic Harry Potter books. They may be among the first buyers of the authentic Harry Potter books."

— Sun Shunlin from the People's Literature Publishing House. Impatient fans of British kid wizard Harry Potter have sparked a legal row in China by putting their own translations of J.K. Rowling's latest blockbuster novel online.

"We have videotape ... but still no justice. No justice in America."

— Activist Molly Bell talking outside court. A Los Angeles judge declared a mistrial on Tuesday in the case of a white, former policeman accused of assaulting a black teenager

during a videotaped arrest last summer after the jury said it was hopelessly deadlocked. Black community leaders expressed outrage with the jury's actions and said it proved that little had changed in Los Angeles in the decade since four white officers were acquitted in the videotaped beating of black motorist Rodney King.

"Can you imagine if another country set up a betting parlor so that people could go in — and is sponsored by the government itself — people could go in and bet on the assassination of an American political figure?"

— Senator Byron Dorgan, Democrat of North Dakota, in disclosing that a Pentagon office has proposed an online futures market for terror attacks.

By Chen Ying / Iris

Readers & Leaders

Life and Death

The writer of this article has read some of Beijing Today's recent reports about murder and crime and expresses his own opinions about the death penalty.

By Robert Newman

A graphic designer is beaten to death in a hospital. There is a public outcry and the nurse who ordered the beating is sentenced to death.

A scientist kills his wife and chops up her body. He is sentenced to death, but 200 intellectuals petition for leniency because he would be more 'useful' to society alive than dead.

A 15-year-old country girl is violently raped and subsequently dies of heart failure. Her attacker is given six months of reform through labor. Who is petitioning for her?

Public anger over the death of Sun Zhigang, the graphic designer detained for not carrying his ID, was justified and the authorities should be praised for bringing those responsible for his death to justice.

The government has even repealed the regulations under which Sun was detained. But what if he had been a laborer? Would anyone have demanded justice then?

And if Xu Jianping, the scientist and businessman with a dozen patents under his belt, had been a street cleaner, how many intellectuals would have asked for leniency in his case?

If Deng Xiaofang's rapist had been a cook, rather than a tax official, and her father had been a rich businessman instead of a farmer, would he have been punished properly for his crime?

You might not have heard about Deng Xiaofang because, unlike Sun and Xu, few newspapers have reported her case. In February, she moved from her mountain village to the county town.

She found a job in a restaurant, but on her first night there, her bosses sent a man up to her bedroom who told her to take off her clothes. She refused and tried to fight him off. He punched her in the face and she lost consciousness. When she came to, blood was pouring from between her legs. She was taken to hospital and operated on, but she and her family couldn't afford further treatment and she died seven weeks later of heart failure.

In any country in the world, who

you are decides how much justice you get, whether you are the victim or the accused. In Britain or America, you receive better justice if you are rich and white than if you are poor and black. Or Irish.

On November 21, 1974 bombs ripped apart two pubs in Birmingham, killing 21 and injuring 200. The Irish Republican Army was blamed and the outcry sparked outrage throughout Britain. Massive pressure was put on the police to catch those responsible.

Six Irishmen were arrested and confessed. The death penalty had been abolished in 1965, so they were sentenced to life imprisonment. The nation's anger was partially satisfied but many felt they should have been executed.

The problem with this case was that their confessions were extracted through torture and evidence that the police presented at their trial was fabricated. The Birmingham Six were innocent.

It took 16 years of campaigning before the truth was finally admitted by the state. Their convictions were overturned, they were released from jail and one of them, Paddy Hill, was later awarded one million pounds sterling in compensation. But when you're dead, you're dead. There's no appeal. Britain puts innocent people in prison. America executes them.

In the US, convicted murderers spend an average of 12 years on death row. During this time, one in seven is exonerated. Supporters of the death penalty say this proves the system works and only the guilty die. But DNA tests on 20,000 convicted criminals showed that one in five was innocent.

How many innocent people have been executed in America? What about China?

Some say we need the death penalty to deter crime. But after Canada abolished it, the murder rate went down, not up. Capital punishment doesn't deter crime. Believing you will be caught and punished does.

Sun Zhigang's killers clearly didn't think they would be. Neither did the official who raped Deng Xiaofang. People like her deserve just as much protection and justice as Sun Zhigang and the wife of Xu Jianping. But execution is not the answer. Guilty or innocent, victim or accused, no one deserves to die.

Robert Newman is a British translator and editor living in Beijing.

The Pros and Cons of Overseas Study

By Shida Zhu

Overseas study has become one of the most coveted ways to provide children with a good education for the Chinese nouveau riche. The intense competition for higher education in China is one reason they seek this route, as is the hope that their kids will become geniuses overnight, so to speak.

Some parents are quite blind in their decision to send their kids abroad. The students going overseas are becoming younger and younger. They do not know or do not care about the challenges facing them while living overseas, far away from their home and the care of their parents.

One of the challenges is whether it is worthwhile to send their kids abroad at so young an age. If they start their overseas education at the junior or senior high level, the parents will pay ten to 20 times more money and the education abroad is not necessarily better than at home at that level. They are paying an exorbitant amount of money for an education that they can get at home. If they begin from the college level, the college education in China is generally as good as overseas.

The other challenge is the loneliness overseas students understandably feel. Loneliness may give rise to a series of psychological problems. They may become totally reluctant to communicate with others or give themselves over to a free-wheeling, absolutely wild lifestyle, contrary to the wishes of their parents. As they are suddenly thrown into a strange foreign environment without anyone they know, they can hardly face the world on their own. They are young and they cannot distinguish good from bad friends on campus and good from bad tendencies.

They have to overcome many traps before they really reach the golden peak of education they imagine. An official of the Chinese embassy in Australia warned the other day that parents have to rethink before they send their young kids abroad for study. Firstly, being so young and unable to control themselves,

they are liable to be tempted by the seamy sides of western life and run away from school. There have even been cases of involvement with gangsters in the Chinese community.

The ideal approach is to go for post-graduate study in fields where the education is better abroad than in China, such as bio-engineering, computer science or aviation technology. The students are better prepared academically and psychologically. Academically, they have already attained the basics in their field of study and will attain a higher specific aim, for instance, a master's degree or a doctorate. Psychologically, as they are mature at that age, they will not find problems communicating with fellow students or countering possible temptations in life.

Overseas study is a good thing for the Chinese and the advancement of Chinese society. It will not do to refrain from it just because of hard challenges. The question is how you make use of it. In modern Chinese history, overseas study has played a vital role in eliminating feudal legacies and democratizing and modernizing Chinese society. There are a lot of brilliant names to speak of. Zou Tianyou, a Yale graduate, was a talented railway engineer; Hu Shi, a graduate of Columbia University, was a pioneer of modern Chinese culture; Qian Xuesen, a graduate of the California Institute of Technology, was the father of China's aviation science.

I believe that the students that return from overseas study in Europe or America will constitute the most vital and dynamic part of the Chinese intelligentsia to promote modernization and effect social changes and usher in democracy and science into Chinese society. So, overseas study is a welcome thing, but one that has to be dealt with rationally and properly to the best benefits of China.

Shida Zhu, director of the department of American social and cultural studies, the Institute of American Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

We welcome your letters and articles, preferably around 700 words. Please give your full name, current address and phone number (not necessarily for publication). You can email us at comment@ynet.com or fax us at (010) 6590 2525.

The views expressed in this column are those of the authors only and do not necessarily reflect the editorial stance of Beijing Today.

By Su Wei

We all know that exercise is generally good for the health, but a slightly less widely accepted fact is that it can also kill you. This doesn't just apply to the elderly or people with pre-congenital conditions. It applies to athletes and otherwise healthy people. The issue was highlighted recently when two professional soccer players collapsed and died while playing.

The 28-year-old Cameroon midfielder Marc-Vivien Foe fell to his knees in the 71st minute of a Confederations Cup semifinal against Colombia on June 26 in Lyon, France. He was lapsing into unconsciousness when he was carried off the field to the sideline,



The 28-year-old Cameroon midfielder Marc-Vivien Foe plays in a Confederations Cup semifinal against Colombia on June 26 in Lyon, France.

Photo by Photocome

where he received treatment, including mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and oxygen.

After 45 minutes of unsuccessful attempts to revive him, he was pronounced dead.

Around one week later, a similar tragedy occurred in Brazil. Maximiliano Patrick Ferreira collapsed during practice with his club, Botafogo de Ribeirao Preto, on July 2.

Teammates said the 21-year-old Brazilian complained of dizziness shortly before collapsing into convulsions on the pitch. "What must have happened ... was an arrhythmia or a severe heart attack, due to a lack of oxygen in the brain," said Dr. Dayr Kiomizu Kazava of the local medicine center, quoted by local newspaper O Estado de Sao Paulo.

Ferreira was taken to the Ribeirania hospital, just 500 meters away, but resuscitation attempts were abandoned after 50 minutes, club doctor Alexandre Vega said.

There have been similar cases in China, and though the national obsession with vigorous exercise continues, from the young to the elderly, experts are urging greater caution.

Pu Yunzong, researcher for the Sports Medicine Institute of Beijing No.3 Hospital, says sudden deaths during sports are called sudden cardiac deaths. "They are accidental deaths, either during sport or within 24 hours afterwards," he said. "One of the main characteristics is the short time it takes, from a few seconds to several minutes."

Rare?

An event about 2,500 years ago is perhaps the earliest re-

corded case of death through over-exertion. In 490 B.C., Pheidippides, a Greek soldier, ran from Marathon to Athens to announce military victory over Persia. After having delivered the message, he collapsed and died.

More recently, several high profile athletes have also been victims, including Olympic gold medal skater Sergei Grinkov, professional basketball players Pete Maravich, Reggie Lewis and Len Bias and Olympic volleyball player Flo Hyman.

Pu says American research indicates that the rate of sudden death for competitive athletes per year is around 1 in 200,000. "There are no published statistics on it for Chinese athletes but the number is probably very similar," he said.

Three years ago, the death of a 19-year-old football player, Cao Chunpeng, shocked the Chinese sports industry.

On October 21, 2000, after passing the ball to one of his teammates, Cao suddenly fell to the ground with a look of agony on his face. His coach thought it was a problem with his ankle which had been troubling him for some time. Cao struggled to get up but fell down again immediately. Six minutes later he was sent to the nearby Fengtai Hospital in Beijing. An hour later it was announced he had died from sudden cardiac arrest.

Cao's family said he had seldom been ill before. Several months later, Zhu Gang, a volleyball player, was also

struck down in his prime. On January 4, 2001, several days after his 30th birthday, Zhu felt acute backache during his normal exercises in Mianyang, Sichuan Province. Two hours after a 12-hour operation, Zhu died. Doctors said he had suffered a heart attack.

Just last Saturday, 19-year-old Beijing handball player Zhang Xiaochen, died during a physical test for a national youth competition in Jiujiang, Jiangxi Province after completing a 2,400-meter run.

Not only sportsmen

On March 10 this year, after running 1,000 of the 3,000 meters during a physical exercise class, a 17-year-old girl, Feng Ying, of Chenghai Middle School, Shanghai, suddenly lost her balance and fainted. Fifteen minutes later, she

was pronounced dead at No.1 People's Hospital.

Her school records showed she was one of the best students in her class at physical exercise. Her medical records also showed nothing abnormal about her health condition.

Twenty days later, a Beijing university student died suddenly after collapsing. Students asked if he needed any help, but he shook his head. Five minutes later, however, he lost consciousness. An hour later, he was dead.

However, the group most at risk is the over-50s. Beijing Emergency Medical Center says most of the people admitted for medical treatment after doing strenuous exercise come from this age group. A common feature is that people are simply doing the exercises they are used to.

In the past week, *Beijing Evening News* has reported the deaths of one middle aged man and one old woman who died during their morning exercises.

Last month, a man in his 50s died of a heart attack in Taoranting Park, Beijing, while practicing his dance steps. His dance partner, quoted by *Beijing Youth Daily*, said he had been dancing to international standard for a long time.

Guangzhou Daily has reported that every month, about a dozen people aged over 50 faint while climbing Baiyun Hill in Guangzhou and many require hospital treatment. Last year, the deaths of two aged people who had been climbing the hill were reported. This year before June there had been four such deaths.

Sports' fault?

Wang Anli says that when these reports of sudden deaths during sport come out, there are always inquiries about safety and exercises. "Such concerns are understandable and reasonable. We have found that some people can even die while doing push-ups, school physical exercises or dancing," he said. "But these people usually have unsteady moods such as being easily annoyed or uneasy while doing exercises, especially when they overdo it. Also, many of them have some kind of condition which has not been detected through common routine medical examinations."

He adds that although there are still no certain conclusions on the cause of sudden death during sports it is certain a variety of chronic diseases can cause such deaths.

"The most common one is heart disease. Other diseases such as cerebral hemorrhage, stroke, problems with the liver or kidney can also cause such deaths," Wang explained. "Other factors, like eating too much before sport, or an immediate hot shower afterwards can also cause sudden death".

Wang highlights that although sudden death during ex-

ercise usually occurs in a short period of time, there are usually some accompanying signals, such as breathing problems, headaches or feeling sick.

"But most people usually consider such signals as a normal part of exercise. They think these signals reveal that they do not have a strong physique and need more exercise," Wang explained. "Instead of taking a rest, they increase the frequency and strength of their exercises. Then tragedies can happen," he said.

This week, *Beijing Today* interviewed several people who were climbing Fragrant Hill. Few thought there was any risk. "How can you say climbing is not good for health," asked Wang, 78, who is used to climbing the hill at least three times a week. "It is a kind of exercise. Exercise is good for people." However, he admits that he sometimes feels sick and even vomits occasionally when climbing the hill. "I do not care too much about that. I just persist."

A security guard at the hill told *Beijing Today* that his major responsibility these days is to help people who have fainted. "One day I helped two people who had fainted. One of them could have died if medical staff had not arrived on time."

He says some people, especially the elderly, are sensitive to any suggestions of taking it easy. He recalls a woman in her 70s who lost her temper after he suggested she take a rest. "Her face was extremely white and her voice was weak," he said. "But she shouted at me, 'Do you think that I cannot climb? Even when everyone else gives up I will still be the one to climb to the top?'"

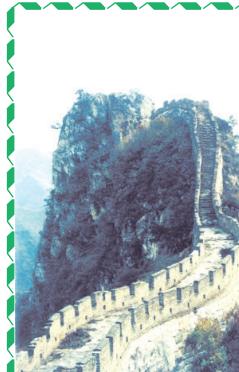
Wang Anli says sports are very important in a person's life no matter how old he or she is but it does not mean that a person can ignore his or her physical condition. "Some people are afraid of being looked down on if they give up doing exercise when they feel uncomfortable. So they take risks," he said.

Pu says extremely vigorous exercise can result in a loss of zinc and iron in the blood, which in turn makes the minerals in the body unbalanced. "So the heart rate speeds up and blood pressure increases, both of which increase the risk of heart attack," he said.

He quotes some research in Germany and America which has found that the risk of suffering a heart attack can increase between six and 100 times when a person does exercise more vigorous than they're used to.

Pu says people should keep a close eye on their pulse rate, and keep it between 130 and 150 a minute at most. "The most important thing is that people bear in mind that the reason to do exercise is not to kill themselves but to have a healthy body," he said.

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You Stole Our Treasure!

Philippines seek return of Chinese porcelain from shipwreck

By Chen Ying

The National Museum of the Philippines is taking legal action against an American adventurer who salvaged nearly 10,000 pieces of ancient Chinese porcelain and pottery from shipwrecks embedded in reefs off Philippine islands in the South China Sea.

A company of divers run by Phil Greco has been working in the area for 12 years and has insured its lavish findings for US \$20 million. Now the haul is about to be sold by US auction house Guernsey's, who described the collection as "mind boggling".

Mr. Wilfredo P. Ronquillo of the National Museum of the Philippines told *Beijing Today* that lawyers have been engaged to sue Greco in the US.

What treasure

According to a report in the *New*



Phil Greco and the treasure

York Times in June, Phil Greco, a New Yorker who became interested in Asian culture while serving in the Vietnam War, lived and worked in the Philippines for more than a decade salvaging old Chi-

nese shipwrecks.

His company, Hong Kong-based Stallion Recoveries, has spent more than twelve years excavating shipwrecks in Philippine territorial waters and has shipped the anti-

quities back to his home in Los Angeles. The majority of the pieces will be sold this fall in New York by Guernsey's. The offering consists primarily of Chinese porcelains and jars from the Ming, Song, Tang, Han and BC periods according to Guernsey's.

"It was mind boggling," said Alan Ettinger, president of Guernsey's, who visited Greco to assess the assembled pottery. Many, he said, are in remarkable condition, from the smallest powder jars to the largest vases. He said the collection included blue and white Ming porcelain, and other pottery and porcelain in earthen tones, browns and burnt oranges and a spectrum of greens, from pale to intense. People can find photographs of the pieces on Guernsey's Web site, www.guernseys.com.

The shipwrecks are still yielding rich findings, Greco told the



Some of the porcelain

Photos provided by Wen Li

New York Times. "We have 16 sites we've been working on for the last six or seven years," Greco said. Three have been particularly productive, he added, and his divers are still finding artifacts there.

Illegal or not?

As the *New York Times* reported, Greco said he always had his operation keep a low profile, even while getting permits from the National Museum of the Philippines and other authorities. "We never told anybody what we were doing," he said. "Once they see it has value, and somebody's interested, it's going to be a lot different working over there."

David G. Concannon, a board member of the Explorer's Club of New York City and a lawyer, said Greco had recently retained him to help protect his interests. "When you get a collection this significant, somebody usually pops up and wants part of it," he said.

As Guernsey's declared at its website, each piece has a National Museum of the Philippines certificate, stamp and permit for export.

But Mr. Ronquillo, Chief of the Archaeology Division of the National Museum of the Philippines, told *Beijing Today* that Greco did not have a legal permit to recover underwater archaeological resources in Philippine territorial waters.

"There were no Philippine export permits granted for the thousands of Chinese porcelain and stoneware materials taken from the Philippines to the United States of America," he said.

Greco has a bad reputation in the Philippines, Ronquillo continued. "He has been caught trying to illegally export thousands of archaeological materials bought from antique shops in Manila with dubious papers with forged signatures of the National Museum director. He uses names of different companies in order to confuse the National Museum. He has also tried to bribe National Museum employees in charge of granting export permits for his advantage."

Ronquillo also said Greco had bought thousands of Chinese porcelain and stoneware goods from antique shops in Manila and passed them off as having been excavated from underwater shipwrecks.

"He has no concern for a country's archaeological cultural heritage, just for making money from selling it. He is a con man who fooled fishermen into revealing their knowledge of underwater archaeological sites with promises of millions of dollars in return," Ronquillo continued.

The National Museum director has written to various archaeological organizations, universities and well-known archaeologists in America to assist in lobbying to help stop the auction from going ahead.

Money and skill

Also in the *New York Times* report, Greco said most archaeologists did not have the money or skill to save such rich history from the ravages of the sea. "They say it's outrageous that I'm pillaging all these national treasures," he said. "But if you're archaeologically correct you could never ever bring this kind of show to the world. It's impossible. It's too much. It's a bridge of 2,000 years of Chinese art and history."

But Ronquillo told *Beijing Today* that the National Museum of the Philippines, with partners from the private sector who funded the activities, had already conducted proper underwater archaeological excavations of Chinese boats and Spanish galleons.

If they were Chinese ships, China might have some claim, but we do not know if this is the case or not," said Mr. Hamilton. "Just as easily, they could be ships from any number of countries and were returning from China with a load of porcelain that was legally traded. China would then have no claim on this material."

Scared to be alone

By An Tong

Turn off the light, the darkness surrounds me,
Open the door, loneliness still accompanies me,
Why couldn't my heart be calm?
What are my opened arms waiting for?
I think I am used to being alone,
Used to being alone,
I sing songs for myself, I listen to them myself,
I tell myself about my story,
But I am scared to be alone,
I am tired of being alone,
Why can't my heart be calm?
I want a home which can hold my loneliness,
I want a sky of blue,
But only I myself walk on the road,
Only I myself feel the lonely world,
Enjoy the happiness of being alone...

By Hou Mingxin

Every weekend, she plays guitar and sings songs in a passage way in Beijing, not for enjoyment, but to make the money she needs to pay for medication to treat her illness.

An Tong has a rare blood disease called aplastic anemia. She has no parents and has to walk on crutches because of her disease. She wants to change her life and to be healthy and happy like other girls. Recently, her sad story has been brought to people's attention.

It started pretty bad

An Tong was born in Inner Mongolia on February 6, 1987. Her mother, a dancer with a local troupe, died of dystocia when An Tong was a baby. The pitiful infant was adopted by a woman who worked with the troupe, whom An calls Mother Tian.

Later, Mother Tian sent An to Shijiazhuang, capital of Hebei province in north China. An was adopted by Mother Tian's sister. She had been living in that city until she came to Beijing for medical help three years ago.

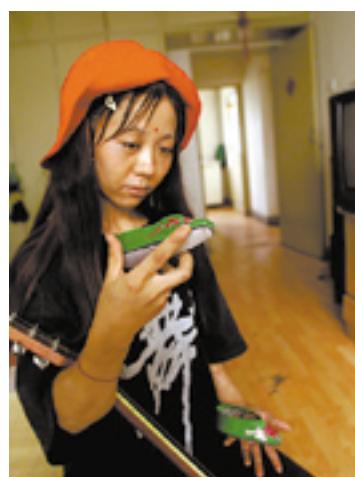
In early 2000, An Tong started to suffer from a strange condition. She would suddenly fall unconscious and even fall into a coma. She injured her waist, and lost the ability to walk. Since then she has had to rely on crutches. In the Hebei Chinese Traditional Medicine Hospital in Shijiazhuang, An's illness was diagnosed as aplastic anemia.

After a blood test, doctors found that she had an unusual blood type, which only seven out of every 100,000 people in Hebei province had.

Last year, An's illness got worse and she needed blood transfusions in order to save her life. But the only person she knew who had the same blood was her grandmother who lives in Suzhou, Zhejiang province.

An's grandmother and cousins were contacted and they gave 2,400 cc blood to An Tong, which saved her. But they haven't contacted her since then.

In 2000, An left her foster par-



An Tong still keeps a pair of dance shoes which are the only gift her mother left her.

ents' family to seek medical help in Beijing.

In her memory, childhood was only endless housework and taking care of her litter sister-her foster mother's child.

It seems that the 16-year-old girl has been alone since she was born.

Brothers and sisters

When An Tong goes out to sing, she's accompanied by a faithful friend who carries her guitar and helps her get on the bus. An calls Fang Hua her "sister".

"I have known her for a long time, since I was a university student in Shijiazhuang. I have been living with her for more than five years," Fang says.

The two met when An Tong was studying dance at Hebei Art School before she became ill.

An and Fang now live in a two-bedroom apartment in the southern suburbs of Beijing. An has two other close friends, two "brothers", who share the apartment with them.

Wang Ruichen, the "elder brother", has known An for seven years since he studied at Hebei Normal University as an art student.

"I was a part-time guitar teacher at the University and An was one of my students," 27-year-old Wang told *Beijing Today*. "She is a very smart girl. She can play anything she hears."

In 2000, An left her foster par-

An's Family



Three years ago, in order to cure An's illness, Wang accompanied An to Beijing where he got a job at an advertising company.

Zhang Yu, 21, is An's younger brother. Two years ago he got to know An through their shared passion on singing.

"When I first saw her two years ago she seemed so frail" he says. "But she has survived. I find she is optimistic and adamant."

The two brothers' salary (2,600 yuan per month in total) is the main income for the "family".

"An's treatment costs about 1,200 yuan per month and the room rent is 800 yuan per month. Besides this, we need to pay for food and other costs," Fang told *Beijing Today*.

"Four months ago, Wang Ruichen pawned his video camera to get some money for An's treatment," Fang added.

In order to earn some money for the family, An decided to go out and sing her songs.

She usually goes out after the two brothers go to work, and she must be back before they return, because they don't like her singing on the road.

"They found out my secret and were angry and told me not to do it again, saying it would not help my illness," An told *Beijing Today*.

Guitar therapy

Last year, An's illness got worse



An Tong and Li Zequan

and she fell into a coma for seven days. The situation was serious, because the "family" had no money to send her to hospital.

"She was lying on the bed and was comatose. There was nothing we could do so we just decided to sing to her," Wang Ruichen says.

They played the guitar and sang songs continually, hoping to reach her. "One day, after we had sung for eight hours, An finally woke up. It was like a miracle," Wang said.

"They all sang songs and prayed for An beside her bed. It was so sentimental," said Li Zequan, a folk flautist from Chongqing in Southwest China. He is another of An's "brothers", having got to know An three years ago when he was selling flutes in Beijing.

A better tomorrow

Each day, when the others go out to work, An stays in the little apartment by herself. She has nothing to do except writing songs and poems.

She still keeps a pair of dance shoes which are the only gift her mother left her.

"Every time when I see the shoes, I think of my mother," An said. "Although I have brothers and sisters now and they all treat me so well, I still miss my mother. But I often talk to her in my dreams."

An Tong's story has been discovered by the media and many people wish to help her.

Last Friday, An received a donation of 20,000 yuan from Beijing New Era Group, a nutrition company.

"I saw her story in the newspaper. She has a difficult life but a natural gift. I hope she can have a normal life," Teng Yanhua, deputy manager general of the company told *Beijing Today* last Friday.

Last Wednesday *Star Daily* reported that Beijing Blind People's School has agreed to accept An Tong to study adjusting the tone of pianos.

Another piece of good news is that An's condition is getting better. Doctors say she may be able to walk without crutches. She is looking forward to dancing again like before.

"He has no concern for a country's archaeological cultural heritage, just for making money from selling it. He is a con man who fooled fishermen into revealing their knowledge of underwater archaeological sites with promises of millions of dollars in return," Ronquillo continued.

The National Museum director has written to various archaeological organizations, universities and well-known archaeologists in America to assist in lobbying to help stop the auction from going ahead.

Expert's view

It is estimated that there are more than three million underwater shipwrecks located and awaiting excavation around the world.

"There's always doubt over shipwrecks' ownership. There is no consistent solution to deal with it among different countries. It requires international conventions and regulations," said Liu Nanhai, vice-president of the Chinese Society of International Law. "It needs to be clear, regarding the original owners of the shipwrecks and the jurisdiction of the waters in which they are found."

"According to international tradition, a shipwreck and its contents generally belong to the original owner if their identity can be discerned. Either that, or the shipwrecks belong to the country in whose territorial waters they were found," he continued.

"This situation involves the Philippines, Greco and China. If China wants to get these pieces of porcelain back, it needs to show evidence to prove that the shipwrecks belonged to China or a Chinese merchant," Liu added.

"If they were Chinese ships, China might have some claim, but we do not know if this is the case or not," said Mr. Hamilton. "Just as easily, they could be ships from any number of countries and were returning from China with a load of porcelain that was legally traded. China would then have no claim on this material."

By Yi Lijing

Translated by Zhang Huan

The story of Weng Yixuan is somewhat similar to that of Robinson Crusoe. But while Crusoe had to survive on a desert island, Weng cut himself adrift from civilization on the ocean wave. Weng is the first Chinese person to sail around the world single-handed. He sailed his 12 meter yacht, named "Albatross", across three oceans and past four continents in just over 1000 days, covering a distance of over 31,200 nautical miles.

His ocean dream may have cost him most of his life savings, but Weng set off again this year on March 16. His dream is to spend half a year sailing around the island countries in the Southern Pacific, passing the Philippines before returning to China.

A dream of sailing alone

Weng was born in Beijing in 1959. In 1980, after studying computer science at Harbin Science and Technology University, he went to Texas State University with the support of his uncle who lived in the US. After his graduation in 1985, he spent 13 years developing computer software.

However, after all these years Weng found himself tiring of relentless competition. He longed to see nature and began to dream of a voyage.

In 1992, when Weng was 33 years old, he bought himself a yacht. He decided to live on it to get to know it better. Outside work, all his free time was now spent on the yacht. During vacations, he sailed around the islands and the national parks of southern Texas and learned to dive. Gradually he got to know more and more about the sea and found many friends with similar interests.

But Weng soon found sailing around in a limited area could not satisfy him. "I longed to sail around the world by myself before I got too old. I also wanted to be the first Chinese person to do it," says Weng.

Weng began his preparations. In 1996, he used the \$100,000 he had been saving for a new house to buy his second yacht, Albatross. The yacht was designed and produced by a famous shipyard and was still in perfect condition though it had been made in 1983. Weng chose the name "Albatross" – a creature in the famous poem "the Ancient Mariner" – to show his determination to tackle nature.

After completing his preparations, Weng went back to Beijing to see his parents. The family wanted him to give up the plan, but Weng was not for turning. His parents knew he liked adventures and was willing to take any challenge so they gave him their blessing.

Loneliness is the worst enemy

On December 14, 1998, Weng sailed Albatross under the Golden Gate Bridge of San Francisco and began his voyage. As he waved goodbye to relatives and friends, he felt a bit like a character in a traditional Chinese poem, solemn and heroic. "Actually I didn't have that much confidence as I was leaving San Francisco and I needed to force



'Only someone who has real nautical experience knows what it's like. It makes me cherish my life hugely. I also have the feeling that I have surpassed myself.'

— Weng Yixuan

myself to go on," he says.

Soon reaching the coast of Mexico, Weng was enjoying his sailing. The weather was good, with sunshine and a comfortable temperature. Only the wind was a little weak so it took him 10 days to arrive at the San Lucas Cape at the southern tip of Baja, California peninsula. But so far, everything was going smoothly.

One night, while Weng was enjoying the moon on the deck, he suddenly smelled burning and saw smoke coming from the cockpit. Despite the risk, he rushed into the cockpit to get the fire extinguisher. He couldn't see anything because of the smoke so he felt around for it. When he found the extinguisher, he suddenly realized he did not know how to use it. He went back on deck to work it out from the instructions and then put out the fire. It was a big shock and is still a bad memory for Weng.

He knew loneliness would be a constant issue, so Weng brought some classic books, both Chinese and foreign, including

Dream of the Red Mansion. He finished it pretty soon.

Life on a roaring wave

Passing the equator, he turned his yacht west to the "Coconut Milk Corridor", a navigation route discovered by Europeans when they were exploring trading routes to the East. However, near the Galapagos Islands, Weng made a mistake with his navigation and sailed into an adverse current. It made it hard to control the boat and it was impossible for him to land.

After this experience, Weng's ability to control the boat and judge different winds and currents improved swiftly. The next problem was one of supply. Lacking any vegetables and fruit he learned to catch fish instead. Sometimes when fresh water was in short supply, he used the sails to collect rainwater during small storms that often hit his yacht in the early hours around dawn.

After leaving Mexico, Weng did not land for another 40 days. Vagaries of the wind and the lack of detailed nautical charts

Around the World in 1000 days

resulted in some hair raising experiences. Albatross nearly hit a rock and the mainsail was torn by the wind.

But by the last day of 1999, Albatross had made it all the way to Auckland, Australia. It was night when Weng got into the harbor and secured his boat. There were crowds of people on the shore and in boats, excitedly waiting for the arrival of a new millennium. Fireworks were going off along with gun salutes. In the new year, Weng was to reach his 40th birthday. Looking to the ocean, he decided to set out for the notorious Cape Horn at the southern tip of South America, one of the most treacherous passages of sea in the world.

"I saw the shadow of death"

Cape Horn is to sailors what Mount Everest is for a climber. It's known as "the graveyard of the sea" because violent storms can blow up at any moment and the water is extremely cold.

"Cape Horn is so cold because it is only 600 nautical miles from Antarctica. My yacht was made in warm California and does not have any heating installations. I only have a spirit stove with me, but I could only use it for half an hour or an hour every day. At times I felt so cold I just could not get to sleep. I had some strange dreams and even thought of death."

However the worst thing was not the coldness but the huge waves that rushed against the yacht. There were several times when the boat nearly capsized. The yacht was pushed over to an angle of nearly 90 degrees, with the mast almost parallel with the sea. Everything not fixed down was thrown around.

But Weng finally made it into harbor in Chile. He heard from a local soldier that a Frenchman who recently sailed to Cape Horn had been struck by septicemia and had to have his feet amputated. "Only someone who has real nautical experience knows what it's like.



It makes me cherish my life hugely. I also have the feeling that I have surpassed myself."

Arrested by Brazilian police

In Brazil, Weng was arrested by the Brazilian police and charged with illegal entry as he did not have a visa. The police ordered him to leave the country within 24 hours. Weng said, "Your coastline is so long. How can I get out of Brazilian waters in one day?" The police officials compromised and gave him 48 hours.

But 48 hours was still not enough. Weng had to talk with some sailors he had got to know in Brazil. A Frenchman advised him to go to Argentina or Paraguay and then come back

with a travel visa. Weng took this advice and got his visa.

Talking about these experiences, Weng is like a naughty boy who enjoys playing pranks. He enjoyed his trip and had a lot of fun.

On April 9, 2002, Weng brought Albatross back to Wellington and thus completed his around-the-world journey. Everybody thought his adventure had ended, but Weng says the voyage is only a comma in his exploring life. He hopes at some point to follow the voyage route of Zheng He (1371-1435), the famous Chinese navigator and diplomat in the Ming Dynasty.

Photos provided by Weng Yixuan



Protected Courtyards

By Lily Li

Tian Shengfen is one of the 110 residents of No. 39 Dongsi Shi'ertiao, the first *siheyuan* (courtyard house) listed in a new protection project launched by the municipal government on July 16. "The government has promised not to tear down our courtyard, I'm no longer worried about leaving the house I have lived in for 54 years," she told *Beijing Today*.

Vice mayor Liu Jingmin said at a ceremony to kick off the protection project, "The Beijing government will stop any activity that threatens the cultural relics of the old Ming and Qing dynasty imperial city area, and large-scale reconstruction is also forbidden."

On the left of the entrance to the courtyard in Dongcheng District hangs a small red sign, identifying it as No. 39 Siheyuan, and on the right is a blue one that reads, "Preserved Siheyuan, No. 1 in Dongcheng District." Wu Gengyan, a resident in the courtyard, says, "Although the preservation sign is small, it means our siheyuan will stand here forever." There are altogether 27 households living in No. 1 compound, most of whom work for the Ministry of Transport.

According to a survey conducted by the Beijing Bureau of Cultural Relics last year, 107 courtyards were listed as preserved units, but only a small portion of these with special architectural or historical merit had been protected by the government as immovable cultural relics. Luo Zhewen, head of the Expert Committee on Ancient Architecture of the State Administration of Cultural Relics, says, "Most courtyards are just managed or reconstructed as ordinary dwellings, which is a great loss for the city."

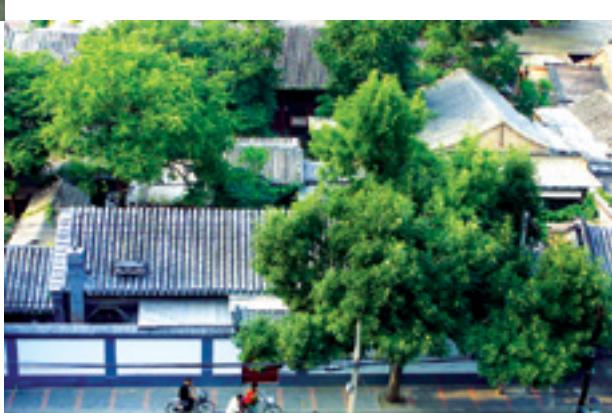
The Siheyuan Preservation Project covers 200 courtyard houses built during the Ming and Qing dynasties in the old imperial city area, bound by Dong Huangcheng in the east, Xi

Huangcheng in the west, Chang'an Avenue in the south, and Ping'an Dadao in the north.

According to the preservation program outlined by the Beijing Cultural Relics Bureau in September 2002, 42 percent of the imperial city area, mostly courtyard houses, should be protected in its entirety.

A large-scale investigation of Beijing's *siheyuans* and *hutongs* (old alleys) began in March, overseen by the Municipal Bureau of Cultural Relics and related district departments. Early this month, 200 were confirmed on the initial list for preservation.

"We usually judge cultural relics according to three criteria, namely the historical, artistic and scientific value," said Luo.



No. 39 Siheyuan was ranked first on the list primarily because of its intact structure, according to Li Jinglu, director of the Dongcheng Cultural Relics Administration. "It is a typical Beijing *siheyuan* and well preserved," said Li, adding that the big gate and three lanes indicate the high social rank of the former owner.

"It has a beautifully carved gate and every house inside has a main room and wing rooms. Although the corridor that once linked the houses has been partly destroyed, it can show a sense of history," he said.

Li told *Beijing Today* that most *siheyuans* in Beijing have suffered neglect to some extent for at least 70 years, so all those with a basically intact structure would be listed as preserved, regardless of the degree of damage suffered.

In 1999, the Beijing government confirmed 25 areas as historical and cultural preservation areas, covering a total of 957 hectares. According to Li, the Siheyuan Preservation Project is an expansion of this work, as most *siheyuans* listed for preservation lie outside the 25 nominated areas.

"We select them from those areas threatened with redevelopment and then prevent the houses from being destroyed," he said.

However, Tian Shengfen said after the ceremony, no further actions have been taken to guarantee the protection of the structure. From her point of view, the Siheyuan Preservation Project only means no further construction and the house must retain its original features.

"I'm familiar with every brick here, I don't want to move outside, so the project is really good news for me. But my son and two daughters, whose families are all in this courtyard, want to move to more modern houses," she said.

Surrounded by taller buildings, the courtyard lacks light and the facilities are behind the times, Tian added.

"The project doesn't mean just keeping all the old things, with no development permitted. Measures will be taken according to local conditions and *siheyuans* can also be renovated in

line with the needs of residents," said Luo Zhewen. The protection work has just started, he points out, and listing those to be protected is only the first step. After this procedure, the related cultural relics departments will do more detailed research and make plans for repair work and utilization.

Li Jinglu says the work of the Cultural Relics Administration now focuses on protection and investigation. According to him, there will be several ways in which the courtyard houses can be used in the future, such as educational centers and memorial places, community centers, up-market residences, hotels and restaurants. "The plans will be made in accordance with each site's situation and the wishes of the residents," he added.

Tian Shengfen moved from Hebei Province to Beijing in 1949. She says this is the first time for her to know personally that the government pays such great attention to the *siheyuan* she lives in. Sun Huanming, an 80-year-old resident, also expressed happiness to see this 200-year-old *siheyuan*, once the home of the martial arts teacher of Puyi, the last emperor of the Qing Dynasty, formerly recognized as a part of the city's cultural heritage.

While No. 39 is first on the protection list, Li Jinglu says the other 199 will soon receive their own protection signs.

Photos by Wu Qiang

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In 1895, Alfred Nobel signed his last will and testament in Paris. Among its four closely-written pages, less than one refers to the donation which was destined to link his name with the supreme achievements of the modern world in science and literature and the cause of peace. In the will, Nobel made his lifelong love of literature clear, as one of the prizes was to be awarded to "the person who shall have produced in the field of literature the most outstanding work in an ideal direction."

Largely due to Nobel's emphasis on idealism and his love for the "nobility of soul and the beauty of form", of all the awards for literature around the world, the Nobel Prize in Literature has had an especially widespread and profound influence on the international literary community.



Wang Meng (1934-) is a native of Beijing. His first long novel *Long Live the Youth* (*Qingchun Wansui*), published in 1953, is still regarded as one of the best novels of New China. In 1956, his short story *A Young Newcomer* in the Ministry got him labeled as a rightist, and he was forced to do labor in a suburb of Beijing after 1958. He worked in Xinjiang for over 10 years starting in 1963 and was then summoned back to Beijing in 1978. While serving in official positions as high as Minister of Culture, he has remained highly productive. His works have won numerous domestic awards and been translated into English, Russian and Japanese and published abroad. *Photo by Photocome*

Nobel Prize in Literature: Where are the Chinese?

By Vivian Zhuang/Yi Yi

On 2003 July 16, The American-Chinese Writers' Association declared their nomination of Wang Meng, a contemporary Chinese writer and vice chairman of the China Writers' Association, to the Nobel Committee of the Swedish Academy in Stockholm as a candidate for the 2003 Nobel Prize in Literature.

It is the fourth time that the Chinese author has been nominated by the association for the prestigious award. Wang Hailong, co-chairman of both the Nobel Literature Prize Chinese Writers Nomination Committee and the American-Chinese Writers' Association, said Wang Meng, 69, was selected because of his "long time of creating literary works that embody the fighting, struggle and history of personal spiritual life in China over the past 50 years."

Nominees for the award do not have to be internally considered "top writers". According to the Nobel Committee's rules, any author, literary organization and even professors of literature or language are qualified to be in the running. Each year's proposals must reach the committee by February 1 and individuals are not allowed to nominate themselves. Around 350 candidates are proposed for the award each year.

The committee then examines the proposals in the spring before presenting a preliminary list of 20 final candidates to the Swedish Academy in April. Before the Academy takes its summer recess, that list is normally reduced to five. The ultimate decision is made by vote in October, and then each year's winner accepts their award and monetary prize from the hands of the King of Sweden in the Stockholm Concert Hall on December 10, Nobel Day.

After hearing the news that he was nominated for the Nobel again, Wang Meng, also formerly the Minister of Culture, went on summer vacation in the seaside city of Beidaihe, Hebei Province, and has not issued any public statements.

Wang is reported to have reacted to his nomination this

year in the same manner as in the past - with total indifference. However, many people in this country have been energized by the proposal, which has sparked a new round of heated discussion over exactly why no Chinese writer has ever received the Nobel Prize for Literature. China-born author Gao Xingjian was awarded the laureate in 2000, but the fact that he emigrated to France and won as a French citizen does not satisfy many of the more nationalist voices in the debate.

A sensitive good thing

Wang Gan, literary critic and editor in chief of the monthly magazine *Selected Chinese Literature*, said his mobile phone has been ringing non-stop since Wang Meng left town.

Wang Gan is a student of Wang Meng's, and the two discussed the issue of Chinese writers and the Nobel Prize around 1988, later published in the book *Conversations Between Wang Meng and Wang Gan*.

The latter Wang said that his teacher has always insisted that Chinese writers should not pander to awards established by foreigners and that the level of Chinese literature should not and could not be judged by foreign standards.

While many domestic writers are aware of Wang Meng's nomination, most are quite guarded about commenting on the issue deeper than agreeing that it is a "sensitive, good thing," as one writer noted.

A writer who requested anonymity said that Wang Meng is one of the most representative contemporary writers in China, whose achievements are clear and whose life has had great ups and downs, making him more than worthy of consideration for the award.

Some other writers argued that selection for the Nobel Prize in Literature is politically motivated, as among Chinese writers, those nominated tend to have been exiled or otherwise estranged from this country.

Since the nomination was reported, the People's Literature Press, publisher of many of Wang's works in recent years, has sped up the compiling of a

23-volume set of the collected works of Wang Meng.

Are there no Chinese masters?

In his will, Alfred Nobel wrote of his "express wish that in awarding the prizes no consideration be given to the nationality of the candidates, but that the most worthy shall receive the prize, whether he be Scandinavian or not." Yet in the over 100 years that the award has been granted, it has mostly gone to writers from Europe and the Americas.

To many people in this country, that is a situation that begs the questions, is the selection fair? And, are there Chinese writers that qualify for Nobel's guidelines that they focus on common themes and problems of humanity and offer deep insights into history and the human soul?

Those questions are a matter of debate, but what can be safely said is that domestic writers have limited exposure overseas. While many of the greats of 20th century Chinese literature, such esteemed writers as Lu Xun, Shen Congwen and Lao She, are recognized in Western literary circles, most younger writers, such as Mo Yan, author of the novel *Red Sorgum*, remain obscure overseas.

Sinologist and translator Göran Malmqvist, who was elected to the Swedish Academy in 1985, said during a visit to Hong Kong in 2000 that "many great writers and poets have emerged in China after the Open-Door Policy...However, most of the good works of Chinese literature have not yet been translated, which could explain why people in the West are ignorant of these writers and masterpieces. And badly translated versions of some works have had a very negative influence and devalued Chinese literature."

He also mentioned that translating is not merely a process of language adaptation, but more importantly a matter of communicating between cultures. "The most difficult thing," Malmqvist said, "is to conquer cultural barriers. It is hard to establish communication and

understanding between members of different cultures, who have different perceptions about what is beautiful. Aesthetic preferences can and do interfere with the reading and interpretation processes."

No proper introduction

Xu Jinlong, professor at the Institute of Foreign Literature under the Chinese Academy of Social Science, echoes such sentiments. He told *Beijing Today* last week that the root cause of Chinese writers' obscurity in the West is a lack of promotion of and introduction to Chinese culture and literature, along with economic development.

According to Xu, while efforts have been made to introduce foreign literature to the Chinese people since the establishment of New China in 1949, not enough has been done to make Chinese literature better known and understood abroad. He said, "One reason for that is the insufficient funds that have gone towards properly translating Chinese literature."

The professor added that after 1949, Chairman Mao and Premier Zhou Enlai hosted a program to translate classic Chinese novels into English to promote Chinese tradition and culture overseas, but such efforts have dropped off in the past 20 years or so of economic reform.

"We could easily blame the ideology of the Cold War for vilifying the image of China, which has led to a general prejudice against this country in the West. Yet we have to admit that failure to positively introduce our culture to the West has allowed foreigners to stick to their prejudices and not given them chances to appreciate the many beauties of Chinese culture and literature," said Xu.

However, he is optimistic about the future of domestic literature. In 2000, Xu invited Japanese winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature Oe Kenzaburo to visit China. According to Xu, during the visit, Kenzaburo said, "The world needs to know China, and the splendor of the works of Chinese writers will soon, very soon, be accepted and appreciated."

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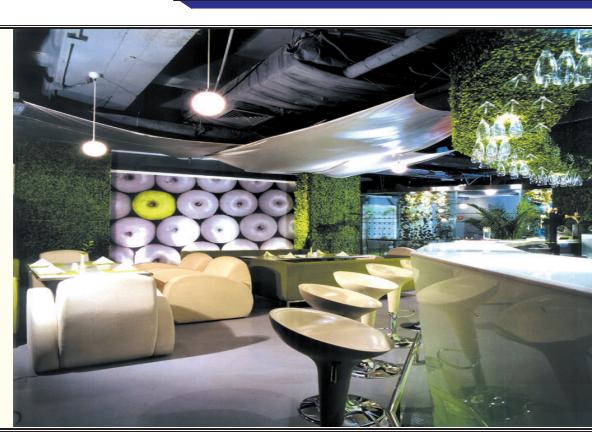
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Vienna Boys Choir to Start Asian Tour in Beijing

By Yi Yi

The Vienna Boys Choir, equal in fame to Austria's other national treasure, the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, will perform on the stage of Poly Theater next month, to kick off their 2003 Asia tour.

Known as the "singing angels," the Vienna Boys Choir boasts a history of over five hundred years. Some of the world's greatest conductors, including Herbert von Karajan, Leonard Bernstein, George Solti and Claudio Abbado have directed the choir, and some of the most brilliant composers including, Haydn and Schubert have been members.

The boys, all between 10 and 14 years old, are trained in the *bel canto* tradition in order to maintain the fullness of their voices and strengthen their stamina.

On every Sunday and religious holiday, the Vienna Boys Choir sing hymns in Vienna's Hofburg Chapel, a tradition that began in 1498. And every year they embark on a world tour.

The choir's first ever Beijing performance at Wumen, in front of the Forbidden City in 1999 and their China tour of 2001, which included Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Nanchang, Zhengzhou, Chengdu, Hong Kong and Macao caused quite a stir, with even standing room tickets selling out.

The repertoire of the choir is extraordinarily broad, including traditional pieces from Austria and Europe, as well as modern masterpieces, Austrian folk songs, church music, comic



operas, and songs by Mozart and Schubert.

One of the highlights of this tour will be a specially designed make-up musical comedy called *The Silk Road*, consisting of eight folk songs from different countries along the Silk Road, among which three are Chinese ballads.

With the SARS epidemic emptying Beijing's theatres and concert halls this spring,

the sponsor of the Vienna Boys Choir tour, UniArt Success Culture and Art saw something of a market risk. However they confirmed the contract with the choir as early as May, ensuring the choir would visit China as scheduled, filling a vacancy in internationally famous troupes.

During the two important Autumn festivals, the Mid-Autumn Festival on September

11, and the National Day holiday in October.

After concerts in Beijing on September 12 and 13, the Vienna Boys Choir will perform in Tianjin, Shanghai, Taiyuan, Wuhan, Hangzhou, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Hong Kong and Macao.

For free delivery of tickets, call 65062775, 65062776, English service available.

Beyond to Perform in Beijing



By Chen Ou

Hong Kong rock band Beyond will give a concert at Beijing Worker's Stadium on August 23, Beijing Gehua Sun Culture and Arts announced Tuesday last week.

Beyond's current tour, which kicked off in Hong Kong in May, is the first time the band has performed together since 1999.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the band, who, given the notoriously fickle nature of the Hong Kong rock scene, have sustained a remarkable degree of popularity. June 30th was also the 10th anniversary of the death of the charismatic lead singer and guitarist, Wong Ka Kui.

Founded in 1983 by Wong Ka Kui, Paul Wong, Steve Wong and Sai Wing Yip, Beyond released their first album, *Goodbye Faith* in 1986. After Wong Ka Kui's death in 1993, the result of a fall from the stage during a performance in Japan, Beyond's music entered a new phase.

To many, Beyond are the face of rock music in Hong Kong. The significance of the band's success is their adroit combination of business and rock music spirit.

Drama without Dialogue

By Chen Ying

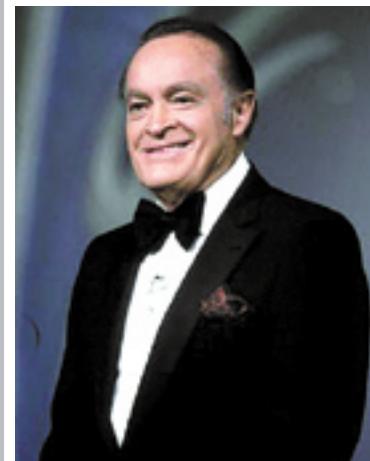
A new drama, *Zhanzheng · Gege (War · Brother)*, is being staged at the Mini Theatre of the Beijing People's Art Theatre.

The story tells of demobilized soldier who suffers psychological stress as a result of being the only survivor of his unit from a battle. Returning home, he helps his young brother and sister conquer their own living difficulties. He encourages his brother and sister to help and a few other veterans to start up their own business, and dies peacefully when his family and friends remember the business after crisis.

There is virtually no dialogue throughout the performance. The mood is set largely through the actors' gestures and body language, as well as the music and lighting.

"This drama is not only a new kind of performance form in China, but also a way to transform people's misunderstandings about drama," commented director and playwright Zhou Wenhong. The play will run until August 17.

WORLDWIDE



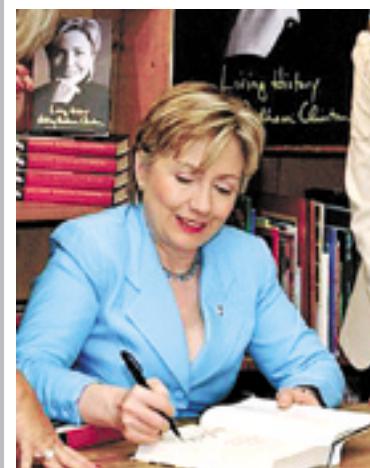
Entertainer Bob Hope Dies at 100

Bob Hope, master of the one-liner and favorite comedian of servicemen and presidents alike, has died, just two months after turning 100.

Hope died late Sunday of pneumonia at his home in Toluca Lake, with his family at his bedside, longtime publicist Ward Grant said Monday.

The nation's most-honored comedian, Hope was a star in every category open to him — vaudeville, radio, television and film. For decades, he took his show on the road to bases around the world, boosting the morale of servicemen from World War II to the Gulf War.

He perfected the one-liner, peppering audiences with a fusillade of brief, topical gags. (AP)



Missy Elliott Tops MTV Music Award Nominations

to mention Monica Lewinsky by name, quickly moving on to the positives the museum will depict.

"It will show that the Clinton Administration was very good for America, especially compared to now," she said, chuckling with her shot at her husband's Republican successor, George W. Bush. "We've seen a 180-degree turn away from fiscal responsibility." (AP)



Missy Elliott Tops MTV Music Award Nominations

Rap diva Missy "Misdemeanor" Elliott on Thursday last week topped a diverse list of nominees for the 2003 MTV Video Music Awards, nabbing eight nods for her music video "Work It."

Country music icon Johnny Cash garnered six nominations for his music video "Hurt."

The 20th annual MTV Video Music Awards show will be broadcast live from New York City's Radio City Music Hall on Thursday, August 28, and will feature performances by Christina Aguilera and Coldplay. (Reuters)

Metallica Finds Humor In Bogus Lawsuit Story

It turns out Metallica does have a sense of humor. The band is well known for their willingness to take legal action when they feel they've been crossed. But, when a bogus news story about the band suing a little known Canadian band, Unfaith, for using the guitar chords "E" and "F" recently made the rounds, the band was amused.

Metallica guitarist Kirk Hammett told the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* he thought the prank was a riot. He said, "That's hilarious, Metallica has always been the butt of a lot of jokes."

The real front man of Unfaith, Erik Ashley, created the story himself, and cleverly designed the Internet posting to make it look like a real MTV news item. The phony story was quickly picked up and reported on by radio stations and newspapers around the world. ABC's Jimmy Kimmel mentioned the lawsuit on his late-night talk show on July 15, only to retract the story the next night when the hoax was revealed.

(Launch Radio Networks)

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Chinese soccer fans watch a Real Madrid train session at the Hongta Sports Center in Kunming.

By Hou Mingxin

Last Friday, the star-studded Real Madrid football team arrived in Kunming, capital of Southwest China's Yunnan Province, for a pre-season Asia training tour following a grueling over-12-hour flight from Madrid, Spain.

China is the first stop in the top team's 17-day East Asia tour. All of Madrid's superstars, including newly signed player David Beckham, Raul Gonzalez, Ronaldo, Zinedine Zidane, Luis Figo and Roberto Carlos, are taking part in the trip.

The team will play four matches in Asia including one in Beijing tomorrow. Thanks to Real Madrid's massive fan base in China and Asia in general, the team's Eastern tour is expected to generate over 8 million euros in proceeds for the club and a whole new generation of Real fans. But what exactly can Chinese football fans expect to get from the visit?

Fans Feverish

When they emerged from their plane after landing at the Kunming airport last Friday, Beckham and his teammates were greeted by folk dancers, elephants and legions of cheering fans hoping for a glimpse of their heroes.

About another 400 fans lined the street to Real Madrid's training camp to watch the tired footballers receive gifts of flower garlands from a Chinese welcoming committee. Fans waved signs saying "Beckham, I Love You!" and "Figo, Crazy For You" and red flags with the logo of Madrid's Asian tour.

Fans in white Real Madrid T-shirts reached out toward the stars as they approached the training camp. Some players stopped to shake hands, but the increasingly press-shy Beckham, surrounded by a dozen Chinese photographers, just gave a slight smile.

The club is due to warm up in Kunming before its match tomorrow with the Dragons, the Chinese all-star team, at 80,000-seat Beijing Worker's Stadium.

The Dragons team is made up of 31 players from four Chinese A-League teams, Beijing, Shenzhen, Yunnan and Shanghai Zhongyuan, and will be managed by former Chinese national coach Nian Weisi. He will be assisted by Qi Wusheng, another previous national coach and now coach of the Yunnan team, and Zhu Guanghu, head coach for Shenzhen.

Tickets prices for the friendly match range from 180 to 2,000 yuan.

Target: China market

When the stars of Real Madrid take the field, their real focus will not be football as much as it will be cashing in on a publicity bonanza.

For the club, the nine-day jaunt in the world's most populous nation will be a first step toward its ambition of building a global trademark meant to make the world's wealthiest club even richer.

"It is part of Real Madrid's global strategy to develop its trademark in all those areas where football is a big sport, and in all emerging markets for the future," said a statement posted on the team's website after the signing of an agreement with sports marketers Asia Sports Development (ASD) earlier last month.

The statement continued, "Football is also an industry, in the leisure sec-

Real Madrid's Arrival Stirs Mixed Feelings

tor more specifically, so we have to compete with a number of other trademarks in order to gain the necessary financial stability for the future."

Real Madrid's expansion into Asian markets could bring in 40 million euros (\$45.84 million) in extra income in the first three years of its new partnership with ASD, according to the club's website.

Real has announced that in that deal, they are guaranteed a minimum of 22 million euros (\$25.21 million) over the first half of the six-year agreement that allows ASD to manage the team's

Korea, football is still developing fast," Brian Lau, a senior events manager of International Management Group, told Reuters earlier this month in Beijing. "But China is a huge market for football and David Beckham is an idol for youngsters in China."

In an interview with *Beijing Today* last Sunday, Chen Xiaoguang, reporter for *China Sports Daily*, said, "The China leg is a crucial step in marketing Real's star roster, as this is a country of 1.3 billion people where football is by far the most popular sport."

The Chinese media is filled with



Real Madrid's newly-signed midfielder David Beckham (left), Zinedine Zidane (center) and other players warm-up at the Hongta Sports Center. Xinhua Photos

brand in Asia and Oceania.

Through its Asia tour, the Real plans to strengthen their presence in what they see as the key emerging market.

Besides playing four matches in Beijing, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Bangkok, the team's future plan includes opening and managing official club shops, restaurants and coffee shops in Asia.

Real Madrid football schools will also be opened, with the first scheduled for Shanghai.

The club's ultimate goal is to overtake Manchester United and its hugely profitable merchandising machine to become Asia's most popular football team.

United's group managing director, David Gill, recently claimed there were about 50 million Manchester fans worldwide, only 10 million of which live in the UK. The majority are in Asia.

Over the past three years Manchester United has opened at least 10 of its own 'Mega Stores' across Asia, and sales of David Beckham products have proven the core of its business.

However, with the star mid-fielder now suited up for the Spanish champions after a transfer deal, Real is banking on the financial rewards its new boy's icon-like adulation should bring.

"Beckham may be more popular in Thailand and Southeast Asian countries, where, compared to Japan and

daily coverage of the European leagues and the names of the world's top players roll off Chinese tongues as easily as the name of its most famous athlete, NBA basketball star Yao Ming.

"This team's players are wildly popular and they have fan bases among different age groups," added Chen.

The 29-time Spanish League champions are also reportedly making preparations to open a football school in Beijing later this year.

More details of Read Madrid's commercial expansion in China have yet to be disclosed, but 28-year-old Beckham, with his wholesome good looks, is certain to figure prominently in the club's commercial attack.

"Most people in China know Beckham, even those who don't follow football," said Jiang Kun, manager at Great Gate Sports Entertainment, the public relations firm involved in Real's China leg, when interviewed by *Titan Sports* last Friday. "I'm sure many people will watch Real Madrid play in China, especially to see Beckham."

Real's greed draws disdain

The Chinese national squad was forced to give up original plans to play a friendly match with Real Madrid on August 14 in Hong Kong because the Spanish champions demanded astronomical payment, *Xinhua* reported on July 15.

According to a top official of Futeba

Company, the promoter of the Chinese national team at all levels, Real Madrid charged an appearance fee of up to two million euros for such a match and demanded Futeba cover their travel and accommodation expenses in China.

"We might have managed to accept the appearance fee and pay for their travel and accommodation, but that was not all they wanted. They had other unreasonable conditions that we could not accept," the official was quoted as saying.

He revealed that Real Madrid asked for 40 per cent of the gate income for the match. "We had to terminate talks with them," the official concluded.

Shanghai gave up an opportunity to host Real Madrid earlier this year, also on account of the team's excessive demands, according to a report published in Shanghai-based *Oriental Sports Daily* last Friday.

The soccer giant had planned to make Shanghai, China's most developed city, its base for entering the Asian market, but the city balked at the huge charges demanded by the team, continued the report.

Two friendly matches scheduled to be held in Malaysia were also cancelled for similar reasons, and Singapore refused approaches by ASD to act as a replacement venue.

Last Wednesday, Asian Football Confederation (AFC) general secretary Dato Peter Velappan publicly criticized Real Madrid's greed, and asked the AFC's 45 national football associations to rebuff the club's excessive demands, last Friday's *Titan Sports* reported.

World-class team Liverpool received around 200,000 euros for each of the friendly matches it played in Southeast Asia last week, charges that are just one-tenth of those demanded by Real Madrid, Velappan pointed out.

Perhaps fearing damage to the club's image as a result of its excessive commercial activities, the club has retracted some of its initial demands.

On Sunday, Emilio Butragueno, the team's assistant sporting director, announced at a press conference at the Hongta Sports Center in Kunming that Real would cancel all commercial promotional activities in China arranged by ASD, *Soccer News* reported on Monday.

That report added that the Spanish champions would still participate in three charitable activities, such as when Ronaldo met with disabled athletes at the training center last weekend.

Regardless of the money debacles, Chinese fans are breathless in anticipation of seeing Real's superstars take the field in this country. "I hope Real Madrid will leave us with a sense of the real spirit of football that we will remember forever," Yang Bin, a local soccer fan, told *Beijing Today* Monday.



Lance Armstrong celebrates his Tour de France victory with his family. Photos by Photocome

Armstrong Makes History

with Dramatic Tour Win

Lance Armstrong celebrated the centenary of the Tour de France by winning the world's most famous cycle race for the fifth time on Sunday, a feat only four other men have achieved.

The 31-year-old cancer survivor, who came back from the near-fatal disease in 1999 to win his first Tour, emulated France's Jacques Anquetil and Bernard Hinault, Belgian Eddy Merckx and Spain's Miguel Indurain at the end of the 94.5-mile final stage to the Champs-Elysees in Paris.

"It's a great feeling when someone like Hinault comes to you on the podium to say 'welcome to the club,'" said Armstrong, who beat German Jan Ullrich by 61 seconds overall, his narrowest Tour win by far.

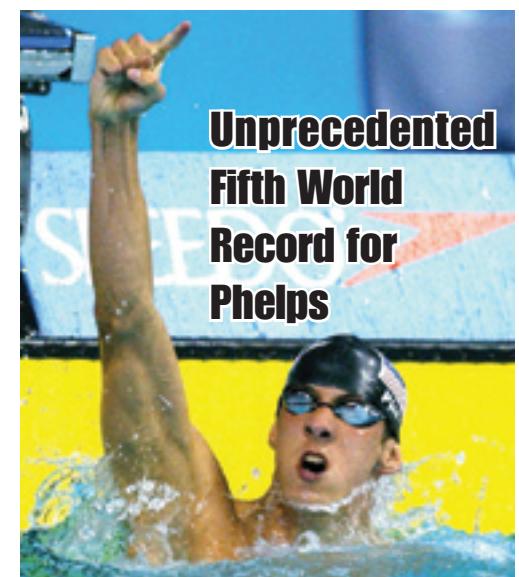
Kazakh Alexander Vinokourov was third, four minutes 14 seconds behind the US Postal team leader, who was challenged and tested for the three weeks, 20 stages and 2,130 miles of the fastest Tour ever, raced at an average of 25.440 mph.

The race was tense, hard-fought, often dramatic, and finally crowned a larger-than-life character.

"It was superb, the best race in 20 years or at least since 1989 when I took over as the Tour director," said Tour director Jean-Marie Leblanc.

"The champions were at their best every day, they were tested and challenged daily, both physically and mentally," he added.

(Reuters)



In an unprecedented feat, American Michael Phelps shattered his fifth world record at the world swimming championships with a bold win in the 400 meters individual medley on Sunday in Barcelona.

Phelps, surpassing Mark Spitz, who set four world records on his way to seven golds at the 1972 Munich Olympics, bounced back from last Saturday's shock defeat in the 100 butterfly to race away with the 400 medley in four minutes and 9.09 seconds.

That sliced over one-and-a-half seconds from the 4:10.73 world mark he set in April this year and represented his fifth world record in six days.

The Americans finished top of the medals table with 11 golds, turning the tables on 2001 number-one nation Australia, who finished with six.

(Reuters)

Beijing Awarded 2005 Sudirman Cup

Beijing was awarded the 2005 Sudirman Cup at the council meeting of the International Badminton Federation (IBF) held in Birmingham, England on Sunday.

Beijing beat Glasgow, Scotland in an overwhelming victory to win the right to host the ninth mixed team badminton world championships.

At the same meeting, Los Angeles, in the US, was chosen over Denmark's Copenhagen to stage the 14th world individual badminton championships in 2005.

It will be the first time for China to host the Sudirman Cup. The traditional badminton powerhouse staged the world championships in 1987, which was split into the world individual championships and Sudirman Cup this year.

Guangzhou in southern China's Guangdong Province played host to the Thomas Cup and Uber Cup finals last year. Those cups are the highest-level men's team and women's team events in the world.

Beijing filed its bid earlier this year and in March sent observers to Eindhoven, Netherlands, where the eighth Sudirman Cup was held.

The Chinese capital, host city for the 2008 Olympics, hopes to use the Sudirman Cup as part of its preparations for the Games.

(Xinhua)

By James Liu
Heat has descended on Beijing, smashing the first unusually wet, temperate months of this summer. Fortunately, the best way to beat the heat is available all over the city – watermelons. As the Chinese say, “in summer, a watermelon a day keeps the doctor away.”

Melons from all over the country can be found in local markets. However, the sweetest, tastiest watermelons hail from Beijing’s own suburbs, Daxing County, to be exact, according to Dr. Xu Yong of the Beijing Vegetable Research Center.

Xu has been studying watermelon raising for ten years, and now most farmers in Daxing use watermelon varieties developed by him. These green watermelons with dark green belts, weighing around seven kilograms each, are masterpieces of fruit engineering. Watermelon from different regions of the country can be found in the city’s market.

The market is dominated, however, by the Jingxin Yihao species, the familiar round, green melons. Fortunately, more interesting melon varieties abound, ranging in shape, color and taste.

Cube watermelon

While they look like works of modern art, cube-shaped watermelons are not really new and made using definitely-low-tech methods. Growing melons are put inside cube models, with larger and larger models used as the melons get bigger. After about one month, the fruits are ripe and shaped in conformance with their cubic confines.

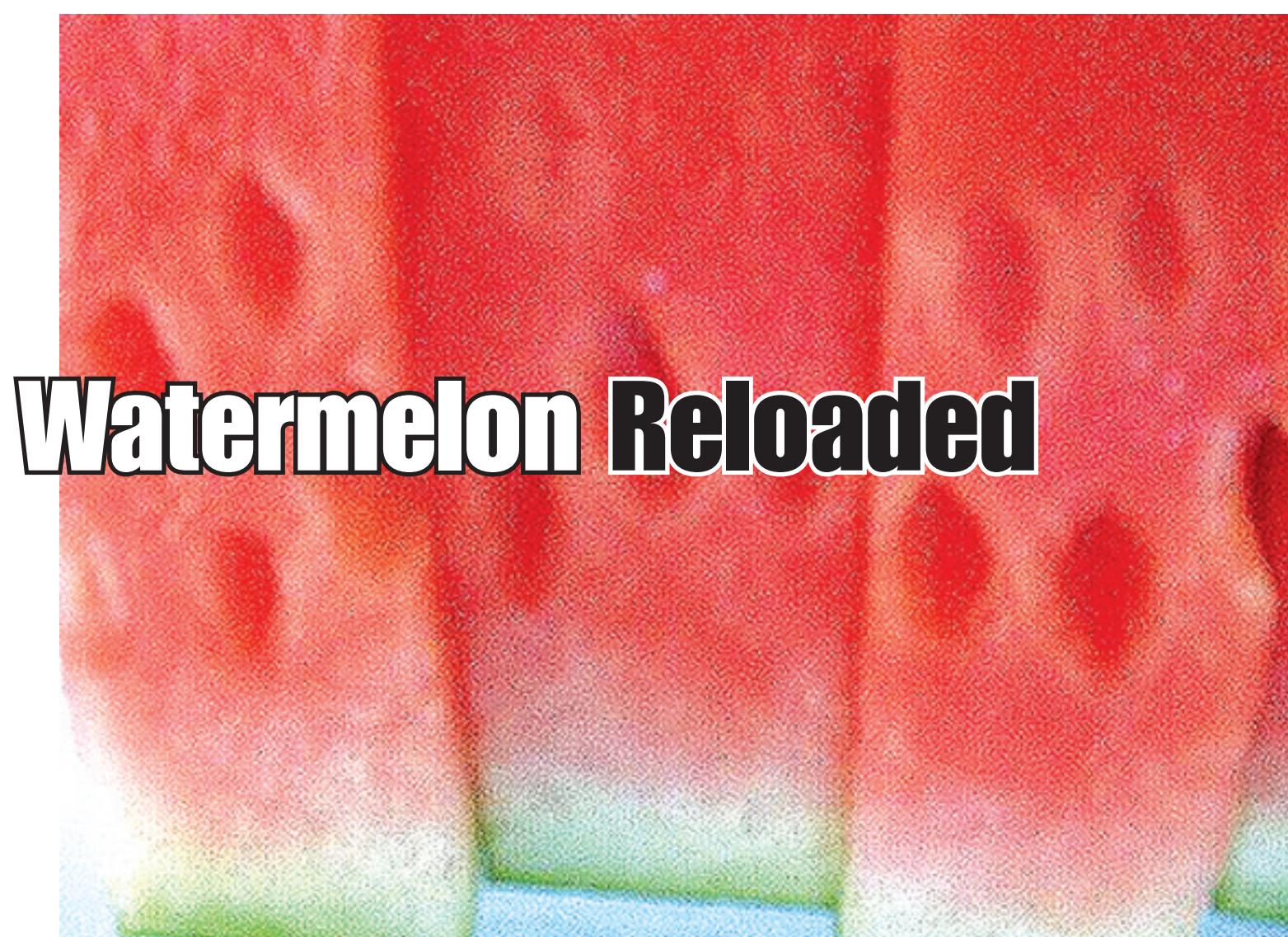
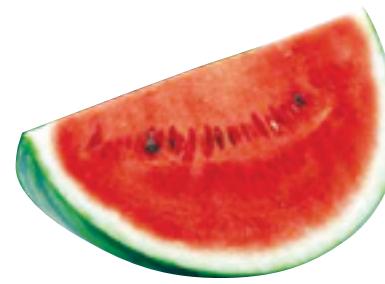
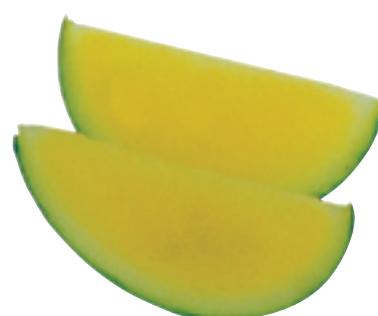
However, cubic melons have thick skins and relatively little flesh, and are less sweet and juicy than other varieties. These funky melons have greater value as a visual statement than a tasty treat.

Ice-cream watermelon

Xu is particularly proud of this variety, which has milk-white flesh mixed with red dots that make the insides of the melons look like ice-cream. They usually weigh around five kilograms and the meat is crisp with a slightly sour, milky flavor. Such non-conformity comes at a price, however, as ice cream watermelons generally cost around three times as much as their standard brethren.

Colorful watermelons

Traditional melons with green rinds and red meat are making way for color alternatives, such as fruits with yellow or orange flesh and yellow skins, which have been test planted in Daxing. They



taste like run-of-the-mill watermelons, but fetch twice as high prices for their designed appearances.

Mini melons

Watermelons are no strangers to trends, and following the popular principle of “less is more”, small melons weighing under three kilograms each have become popular in South and Southeast China. They are small enough for one

person to eat alone, made that much easier because they have a relatively high sugar content and crisp flesh. Such single-serving melons tend to be priced up to three times as high as more common varieties.

Three watermelons = one Viagra?

Studies have proven that watermelons are a source of the amino acid citrulline, which some US scientists have shown can improve libido and sexual vitality. In the blood, citrulline helps increase production of nitric oxide, which stimulates smoother blood flow. The Arizona-based company Naturally Vitamins uses citrulline to produce Stimulin, a natural alternative to Viagra.

However, watermelons are not an easy solution to performance anxiety, as one man would have to eat three whole melons to get a citrulline dose equivalent to one Viagra pill.

Four watermelon no-no's

Though they are wonderfully refreshing in summer heat, overindulging in watermelons can have negative effects, particularly among kids and babies. Below are a few circumstances in which watermelons should be avoided.

People suffering the early stages of flu should not eat watermelon, as it can worsen the effects of the illness and slow recovery.

As a result of watermelons' high water content, people with kidney dysfunction should not eat too much in a short period of time to avoid overtaxing their kidneys.

People with oral ulcers (canker sores) should avoid watermelon.

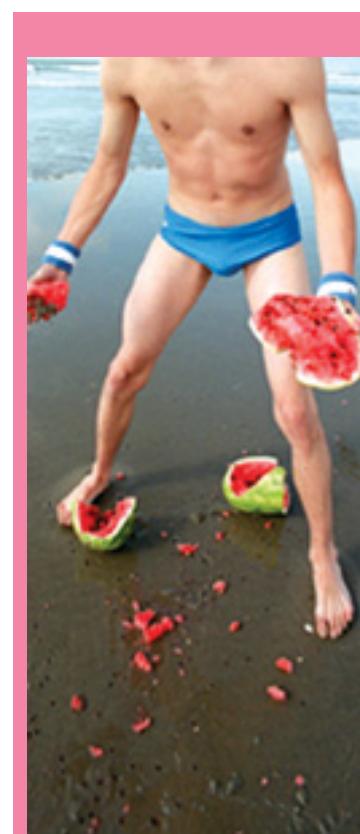
Diabetics are not encouraged to eat watermelon, and should not eat more than 50 grams at a time, because of its high sugar levels.

How to judge a melon

A number of indicators can be used to determine if a watermelon is ripe.

1. All melons have ground spots where they rested on the soil as they grew. Such spots become light green or yellow as fruits mature.

2. If watermelons have stems and leaves, only choose those with curly tendrils that are turning brown.



Three watermelons = one Viagra?

3. As a watermelon ripens, its skin becomes rough.

4. Tap the melon. If the sound is dull, that is a sign the melon is mature. A sharp, metallic sound is an indication a melon is not yet ready for eating.

Watermelon recipes

Cooking with watermelon can be challenging, in no small part because of the fragility of its flesh, but properly prepared,

it can be a delicious ingredient in a salad or soup. Even the rinds can be made into pickles, tasty morsels loved from Guangxi to Georgia.

Watermelon, Green Onion and Mint Salad

By Joel Kirkhart

Ingredients:

5 cups small cubes of seeded watermelon; 1 cup chopped green onions; 3 tablespoons chopped fresh mint; 3 tablespoons chopped fresh Italian parsley; 1 1/2 tablespoons finely chopped seeded deveined chili peppers; 1/4 cup olive oil; 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar or other light vinegar

Procedure:

Combine watermelon, green onions, mint, parsley, and chilies in large bowl. Whisk oil and vinegar in small bowl to blend. Pour dressing over watermelon mixture; toss to coat. Season salad generously with salt and pepper.

Makes six servings.

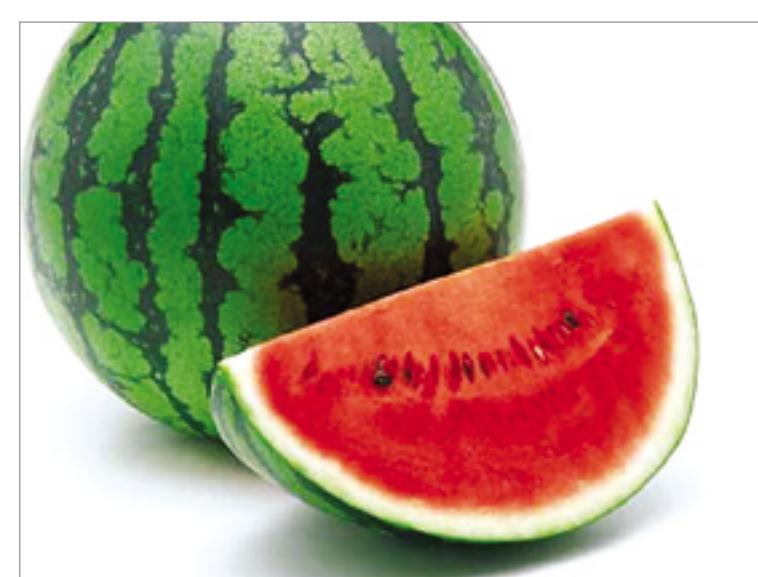
Pork Fried with Watermelon Rind (Guapi Chao Rou)

Ingredients:

200 grams pork; 250 grams watermelon rind (hard layer peeled off); white of one egg; 30 grams oil; 2 tbsp salt; 1 tsp MSG; two tsp cornstarch

Procedure:

Shred watermelon rind and soak in salted water for five minutes. Pat dry. Dice pork and mix with salt, egg white and cornstarch. Heat the oil in a pan and add meat. Cook until nearly done, then add shredded watermelon rind, salt and MSG.



Dining Out

By James Liu / Wesley Lei
Sip on Champagne and Oysters

Enjoy champagne at 90 yuan per glass or 550 yuan per bottle and oysters at 25 yuan each. Refresh yourself with summer cocktails all month for just 30 yuan. When: 6-9 pm Where: Aria, China World Hotel Tel: 6505 2266 ext. 36

Good Eating at Great Wall Sheraton Hotel Beijing

Try authentic pizza for 36 yuan or Chef Tian’s super shark fin casserole for 264 yuan, along with other Italian, Sichuan and Cantonese specialties before August 31 at the Silk Road Trattoria and 21st Floor Restaurant. Tel: 6590 5566 ext. 2117/2295 Garden BBQ

Check out the green garden, twinkling stars and mouthwatering barbecue. If you like green garden, if you like dining under stars, if you like mouthwatering BBQ. Only rmb 98 net per person including free flow of soft drinks and beer. Tel: 6590 5566 ext. 2116

Café California's A La Carte Menu

Café California at the Rosedale Hotel & Suites Beijing features an a la carte menu of classic international snacks, salads, light meals and hot entrees, available daily from 11 am to 11 pm. Try such flavorful dishes as roasted lamb chops, grilled chicken breast with risotto, grilled beef tenderloin and pan-fried salmon steak. Tel: 6436 2288 ext. 2617

All-night Fun at Traders Garden Terrace

Enjoy all-night entertainment at the Garden Terrace, with good food, live entertainment and free flow of soft drinks and beer till the sun comes up. Evening BBQ buffets starts nightly from 6 pm for only 98 yuan plus 15 percent service charge, or try a mix of Western and Asian specialties for lunch. Tel: 6505 2277 ext. 36

Unlimited Dim Sum at Hilton for 68 yuan plus

Hilton's Sui Yuan introduces all-you-can-eat delightful dim sum cooked up by Chef Lam Hock-Hin daily from 11:30 am to 2 pm for 68 yuan, or 88 yuan with the addition of select main dishes. All prices subject to 15 percent surcharge. Tel: 6466 2288 ext. 7416

Terrace Dining at the Saint Regis

Dine in style seven days a week. Weekday offerings include special set lunch menus available at 99 yuan per person, and weekends feature two-to-four course lunches for 98 yuan per person. Prices subject to 15 percent surcharge. Tel: 6460 6688 ext. 2637 Seafood Buffet

Back by popular demand, the Garden Court at the Saint Regis reopened its seafood buffet on July 14. On Friday evenings, enjoy all the finest seafood you want for only 198 yuan. Price subject to 15 percent surcharge. For reservations, call 6460 6688 ext. 2340



Glorious Time for Beer Fans

By James Liu

Beer fans be ready: the ten-day China International Beer Festival 2003 is set to kick off in Dalian in Northeast China's Liaoning Province on Friday. It will be a chance to enjoy beers from many domestic and international brewers, including Budweiser, Carlsberg, Asahi, Tiger, Bitburger, Yanjing and Tsingtao at venues all over town, even on the beach.

A grand opening ceremony will be held in Xinghai Square, the core festival area, at 8 pm. More than 20 bars around Dalian will host smaller celebrations at the same time.

Beer-lovers will be able to get some culture too, thanks to

Music

Army Day Concert

Nicholas Smith will conduct the Beijing Baroque Chamber Chorus in a performance of folk songs including *Fengyang Ge* and *Molihua* (Jasmine) as well as the March of the Liberation Army.

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall **When:** August 1, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 10-100 yuan **Tel:** 6559 8285

Percussion concert

The Wang Jiaxun Percussion Troup will perform a program including dance music from Bolero and music from Africa.

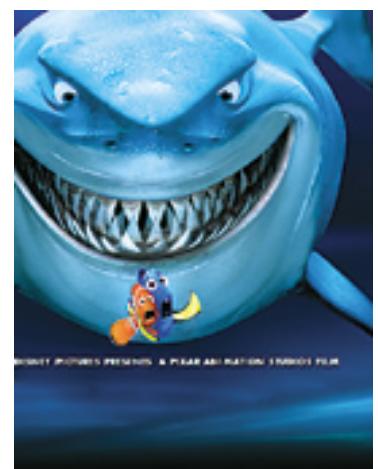
Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall **When:** August 5, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 20-100 yuan **Tel:** 6559 8285

Movies

Shanghai Triad (Yao A Yao, Yao Dao Waipoqiao)

Directed by Zhang Yimou, starring Gong Li, Li Baotian and Li Xuejian. Shuisheng, a young boy from the countryside, moves to Shanghai and gets a job working for the city's most feared crime boss. He is assigned to be the servant to the boss's mistress (Gong Li), a spoiled night-club singer. Following around the mistress, Shuisheng enters the shadows and violence of the Shanghai underworld. In Chinese with English subtitles.

Where: Cherry Lane outdoor movies, Fountain Terrace, Hilton Hotel, 1 Dongfang Lu, Dongsanhuan Beilu **When:** August 1-2, 8:30 pm **Admission:** 50 yuan, includes one beer/non-alcoholic drink **Tel:** 6430 1398



Finding Nemo

This underwater father-son adventure is the newest release from Disney and Pixar. Nemo, a young clownfish, is tragically stolen away from the safety of his coral reef home, and his timid father must search the dangerous and unforgiving ocean to find him. In English with Chinese subtitles.

Where: UME International Cinemaplex, (Huaxing Guoji Yingcheng), 44 Shuangyushu Kexueyuan, Haidian **When:** all month **Admission:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 6261 2851



Activities

Small Village at the Foot of Phoenix Range

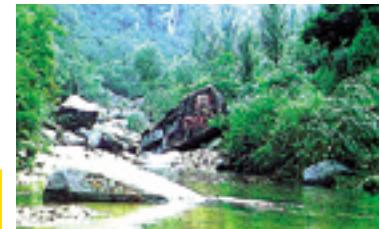
We'll take you to Che'ying Village, west of Beijing, to visit ancient stone Buddhas, caves, temples, palaces and pagodas. Climb up the mountain and enjoy a wonderful day surrounded by natural beauty. English guide service provided.

Where: Meet at the Lee's Carpet House to get on bus **When:** August 10, leave 10 am, return 5 pm **Admission:** 70 yuan (excludes optional fruit-picking fee); 50 yuan for people with own transportation. **Tel:** 8462 2081

Harley's Hundredth

This year is the 100th birthday of the Harley Davidson Motor Company. Chrome Horse Motorcycles Beijing is hosting a range of centennial celebration activities, including exhibitions of two new bike models and discount prices on some items.

Where: 124 Balizhuang Beili, Chaoyang **When:** August 3-10, 10 am - 6 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8582 5566



Jingling Valley (Jinglinggu)

About 90 kilometers north of Beijing, Jingling Valley (Jinglinggu), located on the northwest of Miyun Reservoir, is an ideal place to escape urban worries and enjoy the summer. A wide range of outdoor equipment for volleyball, fishing, football, table tennis and barbecuing is on offer.

Cost: 29 yuan for entry. Package tour service: 98 yuan for one-day round trip and 298 yuan for two-day round trip. **Where:** drive on Jingmi (Beijing-Miyun) Road to Miyun Xidaqiao, then turn left to Heilongtan. Jingling Valley is three kilometers ahead of Heilongtan **Tel:** 6901 6269

Evolution's Second Anniversary

The Evolution Fitness Club turns two on August 17 and will celebrate with a 12-hour Charity Treadmill Marathon team competition at 8 am on August 16. At 10 am next day, the club will host an eight-hour Aerobics Marathon. Try our classes and check out the lucky draw, free gifts and discounted items. **Where:** Dabai Property Center, No.2 Dongsanhuan Nanlu, Chaoyang **Tel:** 6567 0266

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By Guo Yuandan/Wenlong

Call of the Wild

Night is when many wild animals prowl, even inside the Beijing Zoo. Check out the nocturnal activities at the zoo with the start of late hours every Friday and Saturday from August 1 to October 1. The zoo is also organizing a boat ride to Purple Bamboo Park and dinner at the Binfeng Restaurant, after which zoo keepers will help visitors get up-close views of tigers, lions, the slender lorises and a python.

Where: Capital Zoo, 137 Xizhimenwai Dajie, Xicheng **When:** 2:30-9:30 pm **Cost:** 200 yuan (buffet), 300 yuan (banquet), children under 1.2 meters 60 yuan **Tel:** 6835 2765

Photo by Jackey

Lectures

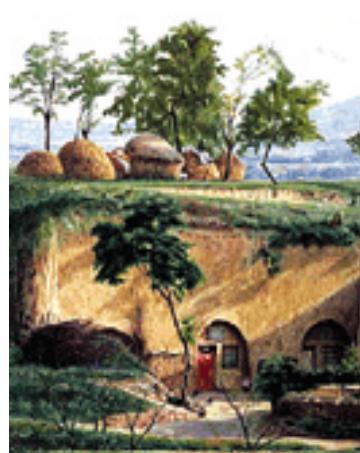
Entrepreneurial Success in China

Stanford GSB Alumni BJ Chapter - "View from the Top 2003" Series is proud to present Baidu Founder and Executive Vice President Xu Yong. Xu will outline his success in starting Baidu, China's leading search engine, and speak about American venture capital investment in high tech in China.

Where: 50 floor, Capital Mansion, 6 Xinyuan Nanlu, Chaoyang **When:** August 6, 6:30 pm **Admission:** 240 yuan **Tel:** 8486 2225 ext. 263

though different styles.

Where: East Gallery, Deshengmen Watchtower, North Second Ring Road, Xicheng **When:** August 3-15, 9 am - 5 pm (except Monday) **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8201 4962



Landscape by Zhai Peihong

Jams

DJ Kevin Shiu

Crowd pleaser and mix master DJ Kevin Shiu has electrified clubs the world over while remaining true to the underground sounds that first inspired him: a deep, moody sound with pounding percussion and a mighty hypnotic groove.

Where: the Club **When:** August 8, 10 pm **Admission:** 100 and 50 yuan **Tel:** 13001135089

A Night of Rawk

Jessica (Jiexika), Dongfang Mixiang, Happy Street (Xingfu Dajie), Wang Juan, and SUBS will perform tonight. TOOKOO, Galaxy Equation (Fangchengshi), Mirage (Haishi Shenlou) take the stage on Saturday. On Sunday Porcelain Plate (Cipan), Black Diamond (Heizuan) will get their rocks off.

Where: Get Lucky, 500 meters east of the south gate of University of International Business and Economics, Chaoyang **When:** August 1-3, 9:30 pm **Admission:** 30 yuan **Tel:** 6429 9109

Nashville Turns Seven

Today is this bar's seventh birthday, so come and enjoy the party and live music until 3 am. A lucky draw and other activities will be held, on top of a 20 percent discount on all drinks and 100-yuan buffet dinner.

Where: Nashville Bar, Sanlitun Nanjie (South bar street) **When:** August 1, 6 pm **Tel:** 6502 4201

Sports

A Long Way from Anywhere

The villagers from Xichangyu have to hike over mountains for two hours just to catch the train. This hike will follow their trail for the first part of the walk. Leaving the village, hikers will split into two groups. Group one will go over a mountain and group two will follow a paved lane, both ending at the reservoir where it's possible to swim.

Where: Miyun, north of Beijing

When: August 3, meet 8 am outside Lido Starbucks, return 5 pm **Admission:** adults 150 yuan, children 100 yuan **Tel:** 13701003694

Services



Summer Highlights

Sign up for an annual membership at the Kerry Sports Center for access to a world-class facilities and get a free extra month of membership, sports bag, tennis lesson and two one-day pass vouchers.

Where: Shangri-La's Kerry Centre Hotel, 1 Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang **When:** till August 31 **Tel:** 6561 8833 ext. 6480

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Catch a Wave



By James Liu

Summer's here and the time is right for ... Hitting the beach, of course! It just seems to get hotter and hotter in Beijing, but there is an alternative to sweltering weekends in this landlocked city.

Twenty-three alternatives, in fact, in *Beijing Today's* list of China's best seaside getaways, from Liaoning to Guangxi. Don't forget the +15 and a bucket and spade.



Xinhua Photo

Fangcheng Golden Beach (1)

By Zhao Hongyi

Located on the southern side of Fangcheng, a coastal city in Guangxi Autonomous Region, the brown sand of the beach shines like gold in the afternoon sun, hence its name, which means Golden Beach.

Fangcheng is close to the border with Vietnam and was once a closed military garrison. Years of relative isolation means the beach has not been exposed to industrial pollution.

This area is populated by people of the Jing ethnic minority, who are originally from Vietnam and number only about 18,000. When the tide is out, Jing women can be seen collecting the small sea crabs that live in the wet sand.

Getting there: Fly from Beijing to Nanning, capital of Guangxi (1,600 yuan) then take a bus to Fangcheng (80 yuan, five hours).

Yalong Bay - tropical paradise (3)

By Zhao Hongyi

Yalong Bay lies 25 kilometers south of Sanya, China's southernmost city, on Hainan Island. The eight-kilometer long beach is famed throughout China as a tropical paradise. The climate is mild, with an average yearly temperature of 25.5-Celsius.

For those inclined towards a slightly more active beach holiday than the lounging-around-on-the-sand-all-day variety, coral reefs populated by colorful tropical fish present snorkeling and skin diving opportunities.

The Underwater World now under construction will be one of the largest of its kind in the world when completed. It

is a comprehensive entertainment park, providing seabed sightseeing, offshore fishing, diving, parachuting, snorkeling, surfing and sailing.

A 134-hectare golf course gives the resort a sense of luxury, but it is not prohibitively expensive.

Getting there: There are direct flights from Beijing to Sanya for around 2,000 yuan.

Website: www.ylb.com

Maluan Bay - fun in the sun (10)

By Lily Li

Maluan Bay seems to have something for everybody: surf, forest, seagulls and a variety of entertainment facilities.

Dongshan (east mountain) Island comprises seven bays extending 30 kilometers from Gongqian, Yunan, Maluan, Jinluan, Jing, Wujiado to Aoqiao. Among these Maluan Bay is especially famous for its cleanliness and convenience. Seashore horse riding, dancing, massage and KTV are all available.

The bay is 2,500 meters long and 60 meters wide. Sanzhijian mountain lies to its northeast and four small islands stand in the south.

One of the most entertaining options here is watching the local women dragging in the fishing nets. It takes a team of seven or eight women about two hours to drag in nets with harvests from the sea.

Getting there: Dongshan Island lies between Xiamen and Shantou, in the Taiwan Straits. It is 143 kilometers from Xiamen and 110 kilometers to Shantou. Fuzhou and Zhangzhou have regular buses connecting with ferries to the island every day.

Accommodation: there are around 70 restaurants, hotels and holiday villages in the island. Room prices ranges from 70 yuan to 400 yuan per day.

Zhujiadian - Where beach meets forest (14)

By Lily Li

With 72 square kilometers of magnificent beach and forest-covered mountains, Zhujiadian is one of China's best-known islands, largely due to its proximity to Putuo Mountain, a holy Buddhist site and Shennongjia, one of the largest fishing harbors in China.

Situated off the coast of Zhoushan, Zhejiang Province, Zhujiadian has four key beauty spots: Shili Jinsha, Bai Mountain, Zhangzhou Bay and Daqing Mountain. Over much of the island, the beach adjoins open pine forest.

Shili Jinsha (ten-mile golden sand beach) is composed of five sand beaches. From August to October every year, an international sand sculpture festival is held here, attended by artists from all over the world.

Bai Mountain has lush pines and is famous for its stone formations. Local residents boast that visitors can still find their own secluded coves with their own pristine beaches for the day.

Getting there: Fly from Beijing to Putuo Mountain Airport (1,200 yuan), and then take a speedboat to Zhujiadian (25 yuan).

Accommodation: The average price for a single room is 250 yuan per day, though small hotels are cheaper, about 160 yuan for a single room per day.

Penglai Paradise (18)

By James Liu

Penglai Island, once a fabled abode of the immortals, according to Chinese legend, is today an increasingly popular seaside resort, with its eight kilometers of beach and crystal clear water. On sunny days, water visibility can reach 5.7 meters.

Development as a beach resort only began in the late 90's, but already, Penglai is providing serious competition for nearby Qindao and Yantai, Shandong's

two best-known seaside towns. The good news for tourists is that Penglai is considerably less crowded than those in peak summer season.

Apart from the natural scenery, Penglai also boasts a number of historic relics. Penglai Pavilion, on the top of Danya Mountain, was first built in 1061. Visitors to the pavilion get a birds-eye view of the entire bay.

A branch of America's Southern Baptist Church built a church on the mountain in 1872. This earliest church of the Southern Baptists in north China has been recently rebuilt and is again open to worshippers.

Jinshitan - clear and clean (22)

By James Liu

Renowned as the best bathing beach in northern China, Jinshitan resort, Liaoning, is listed as one of the country's 15 "healthy" bathing beaches. Situated 58 kilometers from Dalian, the beach stretches four kilometers with a width of 200 meters. The beach is covered with sand and cobble stones and there are no submerged reefs or undertows. Jinshitan is also a popular place for diving with its clean and clear water.

Besides water sports, Jinshitan offers tourists such diversions as a stone museum, golf course, hunting and waxworks museum. The stone museum collects various sedimentary rocks that formed 600 million years ago. The largest sedimentary rock ever discovered is situated in Jinshitan. The 18-hole golf course covers 750 thousand square meters.

Tips: Seashore diving (up to five meters deep) - 200 yuan per hour. Boat diving (up to 15 meters deep) - 300 yuan per hour.

Tourist are only allowed to dive once every 24 hours. Those who have flown in the past 24 hours are not permitted to dive.

Beaches You Can't Miss

Beihai Yintan (2)

Six kilometers south of Beihai, Guangxi, Yintan (Silver Beach) boasts a number of beaches along its 24-kilometer coast of pure white quartz sand. Facing the Beibu Gulf between Vietnam and China, the beach is guaranteed shark-free!

Haikou Holiday Beach (4)

On the western outskirts of Haikou, capital of Hainan Province, Holiday Beach, is a six-kilometer-long, free entertainment park facing the Qiongzhou Strait, one of the busiest sea-lanes in the world.

Donghai Island (5)

Forty kilometers southeast of Zhanjiang, Guangdong, Donghai Island boasts a 28-kilometer, quartz sand beach. Every evening on the beach, local fishermen sell their catches of lobster, abalone, prawn, crab, sea cucumber and fresh fish.

Yang Jiang Zapo (6)

Zapo is a small town on Hailing Island, in the Pearl River delta, boasting of a dozen beaches.

Feisha Beach Resort (7)

Feisha is the longest beach on Shangchuan Island, Guangdong's largest island. Sail boarding, motorcycling, fishing, snorkeling and skin diving are available.

Website: www.shangchuanisland.net

Da Meisha and Xiao Meisha (8)

East of Shenzhen, Da and Xiao Meisha are two small villages with populations numbering less than one hundred each. Both have flat beaches with pure white sand that are popular destinations for the nearby city dwellers.

Website: www.sz-maysa.com

Honghai Bay (9)

The bay abuts two islands, Nan'ao Island and Dengta Island. Nan'ao Island acts as a breakwater; huge waves on one side, flat calm the other.

Huangcuo (11)

Huangcuo Tourist Area, southeast of Xiamen, Fujian, is one of the most popular tourist sites in China. The top attractions are Xiamen World Garden (Xiamen Jingzhou Leyuan) and Golden Sea Amusement Park.

Pingtan Island (12)

Pingtan Island, Fujian, offers clean waters, scenic villages hidden behind green trees, and vast expanses of sand. Take a bus from Fuzhou.

Dasha'ao (13)

Dasha'ao, a paradise for seashell collectors, is one of the two beaches on Nanji Island, off the coast of Wenzhou, Zhejiang.

Lian Island (15)

Lian Island, famed as the home of the Monkey King, is less than one hour's drive south of Lianyungang, at the northern tip of Jiangsu Province.

Rizhao (16)

Rizhao, Shandong, with its four bathing beaches, has the distinction of being the first place on China's mainland touched by the rising sun.

Qingdao No. 1 Bathing Beach (17)

Located on Qingdao's Huiquan Bay, this popular bathing beach is famous for its silk-like sand and tiny tides. Qingdao is just 10 hours by overnight train from Beijing.

Weihai International Bathing Park (19)

Named "garden city" by the Ministry of Construction, Weihai, Shandong, offers a three-kilometer sand beach that the local tourist authority boast can hold 50 thousand tourists at a time!

Golden Beach, Yantai (20)

It is said that the best sand in Shandong Province is found at Yantai, and the best sand in Yantai is at Golden Beach.

Beidaihe (21)

Beidaihe, in the north east of Hebei, has long been one of the most popular tourism centers in the north of China.

Suizhong Beach (23)

Scenes from the movie *Musa* (Warrior, starred by Zhang Ziyi) were shot at Suizhong, in Liaoning, taking advantage of the 14-kilometer white sand beach's forest background.

(Compiled by James Liu, Lily Li and Zhao Hongyi)

